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VILLIERS
HIS FIVE DECADES OF ADVENTURE

FREDERIC VILLIERS

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VILLIERS

HIS FIVE DECADES OF ADVENTURE

VOL. I

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THE AUTHOR IN 1894

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VILLIERS

His Five Decades of Adventure

By

FREDERIC VILLIERS
War Artist and Correspondent

VOLUME I

Harper & Brothers Publishers
New York and London

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VILLIERS: HIS FIVE DECADES OF ADVENTURE

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To

Capt. R. E. POWELL, M.D., of Montreal,
Major A. K. HAYWOOD, M.D. M.C., and the
Nursing Staff of the Montreal General Hospital,
I dedicate this book of adventure in grateful remembrance of their care and solicitude for my welfare during my prolonged visit to their excellent
Hotel Dieu

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FOREWORD

TO those who happen to pick up this volume and do me the honor of reading it I wish to state that they will find no fiction in its pages. Every incident I have set down can be corroborated by comrades, "many still living," who have shared my vicissitudes. There is nothing in this book, as the old adage goes, "to make the dead turn in their graves."

FREDERIC VILLIERS.

August, 1919.

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DECADE

1870–1880

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VILLIERS

HIS FIVE DECADES OF ADVENTURE

Chapter I

1870–1880

FIRST MEMORIES

The passing of the Iron Duke—A hero of the Indian mutiny—The "Kearsarge" and "Alabama"—Student days—Royal Academy and other schools—The first adventure—Paris at the end of the Commune—Scenes in the streets—Prussian brutality—A remarkable prophecy—Fire and smoke bring me in touch with the "Graphic"—My first assignment.

I CAME into the world during the chill hour just before dawn on the 23d of April, 1851, a most appropriate time and a day befitting my subsequent career of war artist and correspondent, for it was the festal day of the fighting patron saint of both Merry England and Holy Russia, St. George; and the time was the hour when bivouacs begin to stir and fresh logs are flung on the waning camp-fires to make the kettles sing. It was, too, the first year of a decade fraught with "alarums, excursions, and bloody conflicts" in which all Europe and the Near and

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Far East became involved. Italy, Austria, Russia, France, Turkey, India, China, and England were the dogs of war, yelping, snarling, tearing, and rending one another during my early childhood.

The first thing I can remember was an event of distinctly military nature, which happened in my second year. My father, one dull September afternoon, recounted to my dear mother, as I sat on her lap, the obsequies of the Iron Duke, which solemn and majestic pageant he had witnessed that morning at St. Paul's Cathedral.

My parents told me later on that, though I seemed deeply interested in the passing of the great Wellington, my artistic senses were the first really to be aroused, for while I was still in my swaddling-clothes I distinctly cooed at the famous statue of the tinted Venus when they took me with them to the first international exhibition in the history of the world, at Hyde Park.

But the belligerent instinct was observed in me at the early age of eight, when I fought with another boy (and I am proud to say a bigger boy) who would insist upon obstructing my view of the home-coming of that gallant soldier, Sir Colin Campbell, after the Indian mutiny. A broken finger of my left hand still testifies to the fierceness of that encounter.

So keen was I at soldiering that at the age of ten I became a cadet in a volunteer corps, bit my cartridge like a man, poured in the powder, and rammed the bullet home in my little Brown Bess,

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and then, with a cap on its nipple, snapped the hammer, and mostly missed the target.

Many a day on the road to school my attention was attracted by pictures in the shop-windows where candies and fruit were on sale. The prints were not of the highest standard of art and were sold either plain for a penny or twopence colored. They represented the characters and *mise en scène* for toy theaters, much in vogue with boys of the later Victorian era, and illustrated the dramas of "The Red Rover," "The Miller and His Men," and "Three-fingered Jack." To these theatrical prints I probably owe my first artistic inspiration. Many joyous hours have I spent in coloring the skies of the "penny plain" with cobalt blue at a penny a cake, and putting brilliant scarlet on the jacket or tinsel jewels on the sword-belt of the Red Rover.

Time wore on, but my taste for art did not wear out; I developed a more ambitious phase. I used to draw regiments of soldiers, mostly in acute profile with fixed bayonets, on my school slate. And when I was sent to college in the north of France I started a magazine, doing most of the illustrations myself. It was during a summer holiday that upon arriving in Dover I was, much to my delight, taken for an American midshipmite. My French college uniform of dark blue with silver stars on cuffs and collar led me to be taken for a Yank by a detachment of the Black Watch, on guard at the castle, who smartly saluted me as I walked past them to visit

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the historic stronghold. I did not make the sentries wise to their mistake, but took the compliment with a *sang-froid* of which the United States navy might well have been proud.

My boyish picture-making developed into such a craze that at the age of seventeen I resolved to go in for it in earnest. I studied at the British Museum, at the art-schools of South Kensington, and at many night classes, and at last succeeded in getting what was called the "bone," a circular piece of ivory that admitted one to the goal of all ambitious students, the schools of the Royal Academy of Arts. My work in the antique class was tiresome and uninteresting, my subject was the discobolus. I had to draw the bones and muscles and then make a chalk drawing of the plaster cast, which had to be painfully stippled to a high point of finish.

I was therefore glad of some relief from this monotonous, dreary business. It came one morning when a fellow student approached me with a proposition for working on a panoroma of the Franco-Prussian War, now drawing to a close. I was to go to Paris and pick up material for the great picture, to leave by that night's mail! I was delighted at the prospect of the journey, but what about a passport, which was absolutely necessary during the war? There was no time for me to procure one, so my friend suggested getting one belonging to some other fellow. This was done and, *presto!* I was practically no longer Frederic Villiers, but Edward Chevalier, for luckily

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in those days there were no photographs to identify one. It was only when in the train nearing Dover that the danger of the situation dawned on me. I was traveling under a false name and about to enter a country in the throes of revolution—for the French government troops were now fighting the Communists. Would the authorities across the Channel listen to my explanations if I were found out, I wondered. Afterward, indeed, I learned that I would have had short shrift and a short range, with the ignominy of being shot as a spy.

Anyway, my principle aim in life has been to "get there," and this little adventure was really the keynote to all the subsequent success in my vagrant life. Only once was I in real jeopardy of being found out, and that was on my arrival in Calais, when passports were collected and examined. My name was called out three times before I suddenly recollected that I was now Edward Chevalier, so I came forward in a semidazed condition, rubbing my eyes as if I had been dozing, and the official gruffly handed me the precious document.

The *Laissez aller* had been duly viséd and was *bon* for the French capital.

Paris when I arrived had been "stewing in its own juice," as the truculent blood-and-iron chancellor, Bismarck, had brutally willed it. The result was a very sorry sight. All the quarters familiar to the tourist had suffered terribly. The Place de la Concorde and the end of the rue Royale were pitted

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with shell-holes where Communist batteries had wrought havoc, for guns of the Versailles faction, placed in front of the Corps Legislatif across the Seine, had been playing at bowls with them just before I arrived. The debris of a Communist emplacement at the end of the rue de Rivoli had not yet been cleared away, and the shattered glass and plaster of the houses and shops facing the gardens of the Tuileries away down to the Hôtel Meurice showed how its guns had drawn the fire of the Versailles infantry. There had also been a Communist battery at the end of the rue St.-Honoré, which had blazed away right down the rue du Faubourg St.-Honoré at the government troops slowly advancing and seeking the cover of the buildings.

The church of Notre Dame de Lorette was the center of much fighting. Thence down the rue Château Dun toward the Boulevard Haussmann kiosks, lamp-posts and trees were torn, smashed and scattered, presenting a scene of utter desolation. The Madeleine, avenue de l'Opéra, rue de la Paix, and the Place Vendome all had suffered by shell or bullet. Here in the historic square, just opposite where the Ritz now stands, Napoleon's column was lying on the ground, broken in three pieces, round which was a cordon of police to keep the crowd away. This was the only place where the public showed any interest or concern; elsewhere the citizens were going about their business as if their city had never

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been marred. Even the lovely palace of the Tuileries, still smoldering and smoking—the most wicked, senseless destruction of all—did not seem to disturb their equanimity.

One corner of a certain "God's acre," the famous cemetery of Père Lachaise, might better have been called the Devil's own, for it had been devoted to the execution of hundreds of the unfortunate *Communards*. The earth and chloride of lime only lightly covered the wretched bodies. Here and there an arm, a leg, or a foot gave evidence of the jumble of the dead as they fell pell-mell under the volleys of the firing-squad. The wall against which they had stood or knelt was blotched and smeared with the blood of the victims and fretted by the lead of the executioners. I hardly know why, I suppose because he was a brave leader and a soldier of considerable ability, but I was sincerely glad that Dombrowski, the Communist general, died early in the game, fighting in a hand-to-hand scuffle, and was not lying there higgledy-piggledy with the gruesome lot in that awful, evil-smelling trench at the foot of that blood-drenched wall.

I returned to England without being molested and with some interesting material. The panorama people were satisfied and I was heartily glad to resume my own name once more. This experience served to give me an early insight into the brutal and merciless nature of the Germans. After having raided, ravished and harassed the fair land of

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France from the Rhine to the Seine, they were now gloating over the internecine troubles of its capital, round which they held tight a ring of iron.

I cannot refrain from quoting here a few prophetic lines from a book by the joint authors Erkmann and Chatrian, called *The Plébiscite*, published in the '80's: "These Germans are the most perfect spies in the world; they come into the world to spy, as birds do to thieve; it is part of their nature. Let the Americans and all people who are kind enough to receive them think of this. I am not inventing, I am not saying a word too much. We (France) are an example; let the world profit by it."

Then, referring to the indifference of England and her unpreparedness for any belligerent eventuality: "I also believe that every fault brings its punishment; the English will suffer for their faults, as we are doing for ours; and the Germans, after having terrified the world with their ambition, will one day be made to rue their cruelty, their hypocrisy, and their robberies. God is just!"

Finally, after describing the pageant of the invaders at the crowning of the old King of Prussia as German Emperor at Versailles, the book continues: "Alas! notwithstanding all this, these people will die, *and in a hundred years will be recognized as barbarians;* their names will be inscribed on the rolls of the plagues of the human race, and there they will remain to the end of time."

I was still working at the plaster cast in the

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Academy schools when an incident occurred that, for a time, broke the monotony of my task.

The Alexandra Palace at Muswell Hill had just been opened by royalty and was creating considerable attention. I resolved to visit the show and see if I could pick up a few sketches for the illustrated press. In those days the kodak was not in existence and photography was still in its infancy. The pen and pencil were, therefore, the only mediums to convey to the public pictures of current events.

I was at the exhibition early, and as very few visitors had arrived I spent some time in chatting with a flower girl who, in picturesque costume, was in charge of a stall under the great dome. I happened to look up at the frescoes ornamenting its curves when I noticed a flame burst out, no bigger than my hand, not far from a point where workmen were giving the last touches. Smoke at once began filling the dome. The girl cried out, "My God! the place is on fire!" I told her not to scare the visitors, who were now arriving, but to hurry to the fire-station. Presently she returned with a few men, bringing a couple of water tanks, a hose and a hand pump. The appliance did not amount to more than a glorified water squirt and could not reach within a hundred feet of the flames, which were now steadily climbing up, involving the whole of the arch with dense smoke. I first thought to make a sketch, but quickly changed my mind, for I knew that a fine

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loan collection of modern paintings was on exhibition in the main gallery. I rushed into the grounds, collected about a dozen gardeners and laborers, and placed before them the proposition of saving the pictures. They became enthusiastic and followed me to a man.

No time was to be lost; the fire was gaining by leaps and bounds. We ran into the picture gallery, stripped the paintings of their frames, and then hurried to the nearest windows and dropped them into the hands of men outside, who piled them up on the grass, but were obliged to shift them from time to time as the heat of the burning building threatened to scorch the pigments.

Just in time we arrived at the last batch of pictures, which we practically snatched from the devouring flames. These had to be removed by another route, for the windows through which the others had been saved were now vomiting fire. We were halfway down a corridor leading to a lower door when there came a crash like thunder—the dome had fallen in. "Down on your bellies!" I shouted to the men; "keep your mouths close to the floor, push the pictures forward on their backs." A black billow of smoke now swirled through the corridor, nearly choking the life out of us.

But my men stuck to the game and every one of the works of art was saved. Many of the rescuers, quite overcome by the smoke, had to be dragged by their fellows to the patch of lawn on which the

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pictures had been collected, and there they lay, gulping in the fresh air. We were pretty well done, and all dying for a drink. Every drop of water had been let loose on the fire, so I hunted around for liquid and came across several cases of wine outside the cellars of the demolished refreshment room, one of which we eventually succeeded in dragging to our rendezvous. It contained Moët & Chandon. To my gentle readers of to-day the name of this firm may not be known, but in the old days it was familiar as that of the makers of a brand of noble and generous sparkling tipple at Épernay in the champagne district of sunny France.

Feeling deep gratitude toward my dauntless crew for saving a valuable collection of paintings to the nation, I told them to seize a bottle apiece. The group of smoke-grimed men, with fat quarts in their fists, surrounded by landscapes, sea pieces and mermaids, made a sight to see as they quaffed the sparkling liquid with evident gusto. Some eventually dropped off and slept the sleep of the just and weary until one of the palace guards came across the peaceful scene and tried to break up the happy party by arresting my heroes for looting the wine.

I pointed out to him that after performing such arduous duty the men deserved to quench their thirst in the very best; but he was not at all sympathetic and we could not very well enthuse him, for there was not a drop of liquor left! Anyway, I took on the responsibility, and my volunteers were

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freed. The caterers to the palace later sent me quite a large bill—which I refused to pay. But they never troubled me with another, for I believe the palace authorities came to the conclusion that the pictures were worth at least that case of wine.

The calamity to the Alexandra Palace was, however, anything but that to me, for I made several sketches of the dramatic event and sent them to the weekly *Graphic*, which, thanks to my rapid work, was able to publish them in the current week's edition. This incident brought me an introduction to the editor of that paper, for which I was destined later on to become special artist and travel the whole world over. It is a coincidence worthy of note that my first sketches which appeared in any illustrated paper were of fire and smoke; for half a century thereafter fire and smoke, though of a slightly different character, have been the "local color" of the principal subjects to fill my sketchbooks.

However, my sedentary work at the schools was the principal factor in causing me to break away from the Royal Academy. In the early summer of 1876 I was suffering terribly from indigestion. One afternoon, while looking up material in the British Museum, I was attacked with so bad a fit of dyspeptic melancholia that I resolved to try to walk it off.

Making my way toward Holborn, I noticed a crowd around a poster of an evening paper. Elbowing my way through the little mob, I discovered that

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the cause of this sensation was a large caption announcing that Prince Milan of Serbia had declared war against Turkey.

That little Christian kingdom had at last resolved to act as champion for its oppressed neighbors, the Bulgarians, suffering under the Turkish yoke, and had declared war against the great Moslem power. There was much excitement throughout Europe over this little storm cloud in the East, for it portended a hurricane that might do considerable damage to more than one continental Power.

"Ah!" thought I. "Here's an opportunity for me to rid myself, in the noise and excitement of battle, of this dyspepsia which has been my bugbear for months."

I hurried back to the Museum and wrote to the editor of the weekly *Graphic*, offering my services for the coming campaign. After the letter was posted I passed a restless night, but early the next morning I received a telegram from Mr. William Thomas, the manager, asking me to call upon him. As I entered the room he came at once to the point:

"Can you speak French or German?" he asked.

"I can get along fairly well with French."

"That will do. When can you go?"

"At once."

"Then please start by this evening's mail."

A short interview, but a very sweet one to me.

I left my dear mother in tears at Charing Cross Station, and with a bag of sovereigns in my pocket

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and a letter from my editor to Mr. Archibald Forbes, the eminent correspondent of the London *Daily News*, I was off to the wars within eighteen hours of making my resolve, and I fancied myself the luckiest and happiest of mortals.

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Chapter II

SERBIA UNDER MILAN

King and Queen of the Tziganes—Our genial consul—A prince born to trouble—I meet Archibald Forbes—Carping critics—The hoof of the Turkish horse—My baptism of fire—A retreat in a storm—Winning my spurs—The lurid glow over the Maritza Valley—I witness many skirmishes—I assist surgeons in the field and at the base—Still another retreat—One of our fraternity killed.

WHEN I arrived in Belgrade, in the summer of 1876, the sounds of war reverberated through the streets of the ancient Serbian capital. There was heard on all sides the ringing noise of the smith's hammer, together with the rolling of gun limbers over rough stones, the whir of the grindstones as knives and yataghans were sharpened and pointed, and the tramp, tramp of the marching troops. My first thought was to find Archibald Forbes, who was already en route to the front, for I felt that if I met that splendid fellow he would tell me how to set about becoming a war artist at once. Was he not the hero I had worshiped since a boy, to me the central figure of Sedan, Gravelotte, and Le Bourget? I added to my outfit riding boots, spurs and a moderate-sized bulldog revolver to prove myself in his

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eyes, directly he saw me, a determined young fellow out for adventure.

I reported at once to Mr. William White, the British consul, to ascertain Forbes's whereabouts. He was a bluff, generous-hearted Englishman who befriended me in many ways. He was good enough to procure me an entrée to the cathedral of Belgrade, to see the christening of the baby prince who later became King Alexander and was eventually murdered in his capital with Draga, his queen. That unfortunate prince was born to trouble, for his country was already in the throes of bloody war and the joyous clangor of the bells in honor of his birth, merrily ringing for miles round the old city, struck me as being tragically incongruous with the ominous rumble of artillery wagons over the cobble-paved streets and the incessant tramp of troops.

An Italian called Lazzaro and a Frenchman named Dick de Longlay, who were out for Italian and French newspapers, were living at my hotel, when one evening we received a letter addressed to us brought by a special messenger—a cutthroat-looking individual who, however, was courtesy personified. The note, which was translated by our interpreter, ran as follows: "Would the Frankish gentlemen honor the King and Queen of the Tziganes with a visit, and eat with them?"

We were glad of a little adventure, for we were, for the moment, kicking our heels, waiting for the necessary passes from the War Office which would

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permit us to go to the front. Therefore, we set out early the next morning on horseback for the gypsy encampment. The Tziganes wished that out visit should not be made known to the Serbian authorities, and we were for this reason instructed to ride in a certain direction till a guide met us to conduct us to the camp. As a precautionary measure we carried our revolvers, for we had heard that the gypsies of the Balkan Peninsula were generally more reckless and lawless than most of their brethren.

The way lay across the smiling fields, radiant with golden corn, till we came at length to a straggling sun-baked village without the slightest sign of any inhabitants, when suddenly there stood before us a picturesque-looking fellow in ragged shirt, red sash, and Turkish trousers, with a fiddle under his arm and a nasty-looking long knife stuck in his belt. He took off his greasy astrakhan-fur cap and, with a low bow, motioned us to dismount. The moment our feet touched the dusty road another figure, but more in tatters, who seemed to have sprung from nowhere in particular, seized our bridles and led our horses behind us down the deserted street. Soon we stopped at a two-story building, the upper rooms of which opened upon a balcony. It had evidently been the schoolhouse of the village. Our guide looked impatiently up and down the dead-white sun-bleached road. There was no sign of a living soul upon it besides ourselves. Suddenly a shrill whistle broke the silence and from every

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house swarmed women and children. The youngsters, black and stark as Nubians, came tumbling about us with merry shouts of welcome.

From the balcony of the schoolhouse appeared a man and a woman, the latter in green-velvet jacket and rose-colored silk skirt, with a garland of flowers round her head. The man wore a gold-embroidered, light-blue cloth tunic, red full Turkish trousers, and a deep band of polished yellow metal around his astrakhan cap. They gave us a nod and a smile of welcome. The shrill note of the whistle was heard once more, and the crowd now quickly ceased their clamor and disappeared as mysteriously as they came. The two on the balcony retired through the window and the whole street was again as deadly silent as if a plague had visited it.

We were now ushered through a half-closed door into the schoolhouse. Then we climbed up a rickety stair and entered a fairly large room, where we discovered the gayly dressed man and woman whom we had seen on the balcony, now seated on two high stools. On either side of them stood a half dozen fiddlers who were indeed clad in motley. In the center of the room was a table on which were loaves of black bread, green pods of paprika, and jugs of wine. After we had been presented to the King and Queen of the Beggars, for that was their proud title, chairs were placed for us at the table, when, with some ceremony, a large metal dish was brought in containing a bake of fowls, tomatoes, and red

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paprikas. While we were eating this really good fare the fiddlers retired to the balcony and commenced to play as those wild Tziganes alone can. I shall hardly forget their wonderful performance. The whole incident of the visit was charming, and especially so was the evident delight of the people on seeing us the guests of their king and queen. They were beggars all, and lived by their fiddling, yet if we had offered them any gratuity it would have been rejected with scorn.

On our leaving there was no further demonstration by the people. The royal pair bowed us a farewell from their balcony as we trotted down the deserted thoroughfare. Then they disappeared. Soon our guide left us at the very spot on which he had picked us up that morning.

Arrived in Belgrade, we found there had been a hue and cry for us, for the police and the town guard, always watching, had not seen us leave the city. By some means only known to those Tzigane folk, the police had been completely baffled, and, of course, we did not enlighten them on the subject of our visit. Riding into the gypsies' village a few days afterward, we found no vestige of the wandering fiddlers; they had effaced themselves as completely as though the earth had swallowed them up.

Shortly after this strange visit I set forth by stage wagon to the headquarters of the Serb army at Paratchin, where the British consul had told me I should meet Forbes. It was market day when the

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rickety old diligence rumbled over the cobbles of the town, and the streets were thronged with picturesque peasantry in their white-linen tunics girdled with a red sash and wearing the scarlet fez, or else fur bonnets for their headgear. Not a few truculently carried knives and silver-mounted pistols in their belts. Pigs were squealing, cattle bellowing, donkeys braying, geese cackling, and in addition to the clamor of the people haggling over their wares, was heard the jingle and clatter of orderlies hurrying hither and thither through the throng.

But the most striking figure in the whole of this busy scene, sauntering along, elbowing his way through the motley crowd, was a tall, well-knit man in knickers and jacket of homespun with tam-o'-shanter bonnet cocked over his handsome, sunburnt face and a short cherry-wood pipe protruding from beneath his tawny mustache.

"By Jove! this must be the very man I want to meet," I thought, as I hurried up to him.

"Mr. Forbes, I believe?"

I was right, and at once handed him my letter of introduction. He quickly scanned the contents, and said, with a genial smile:

"You must be tired and hungry after your long journey. Come with me to my hotel; I think I can get you a substitute for a beefsteak, and a bottle of beer."

If we were not friends on sight, the schnitzel and lager clinched it. Over that simple repast in the

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MY CART IN THE BALKAN WAR

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Paratchin hostelry we struck up a friendship which was in a short period to be cemented by the hardships and dangers shared together on many a battlefield—a friendship which has been, perhaps, one of the greatest satisfactions of my vagrant life.

That evening some wounded Bulgarian fugitives sought safety within the Serbian lines and arrived in town. The pitiable story of their sufferings was wired to England by Forbes and I sketched the curiously clad groups of wretched women and children. Forbes, in his message, good-naturedly stated that I had arrived—that the pencil was assisting the pen—and soon the public would have pictures to illustrate what he had written. Those simple words in Forbes's telegram established me in the eyes of my editor as a worthy representative of the *Graphic*.

When the necessary permits to join the forces in the field were granted us I found that I must receive my baptism of fire with the army of the Ebar, while Forbes was appointed to that of the river Timok. It was a sad separation to me, for I had nursed the hope that it was possible we might campaign together. We parted one afternoon on a white, dusty road running south and east. Forbes was for the east, and I turned my horse southward. We embraced on parting, for we might never meet again, but we vowed that if the fortunes of war brought us near each other we would work together in future.

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A few miles along the road I came up with my two friends of the gypsy incident. They were both bright, cheery fellows and full of good humor. De Longlay had married an Englishwoman, but in spite of that he was woefully ignorant of her mother tongue. He seemed to cherish his little daughter and was always humming one of her nursery songs, "Ze poor dog Tray everre faithful," and this was about the only English he knew.

The Italian, Lazzaro, was a tall, delicate individual with pale, Semitic features and black beard, wearing a dark suit that might have served for an afternoon tea party. His hands were incased in lavender kid gloves, and he wore patent-leather shoes with white spats—a curious get-up for a campaign. The only kit he carried was a black waterproof satchel which apparently contained more lavender gloves, and a silver-mounted cane. The Frenchman—a hearty, florid type—had quite an outfit, and he "swapped" a pair of tan top-boots with me for a light waterproof coat. The Italian, seeing some business done, showed his Jewish blood by offering to exchange a pair of his pretty gloves for my binocular, but I politely refused to make the deal.

He was always talking about his numerous flirtations and sighed particularly over the memory of a certain countess whom he had left disconsolate in a villa outside Rome. When tired of recounting his amours he would curse in French whenever the

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jolt of the springless cart, in which he was traveling, unshipped his black-rimmed monocle from his left eye.

Both these correspondents were anxiously looking out for evidence of hostilities en route, and they came to the conclusion that the tall palisades of timber surrounding the homesteads we passed were defenses against the roving bands of bloodthirsty Bashi-Bazouks or other banditti. It was only after I saw a number of pigs, who are almost as wild as boars in this country, snorting around with wooden triangular collars that I could persuade them that these palings were erected to keep the kitchen gardens from being uprooted. "Bah! After all," cried Lazzaro, gesticulating with his gloved hands, "they are ze same, both swine, ze pork, and ze Turk, *nom de Dieu!*" De Longlay then hummed "Ze poor dog, Tray," and the incident was closed.

My friends left me at Caragugivats to see the base hospital! I never met them at the front. They used to get there sometimes, I believe, but mostly after the excitement of the fray was over. For instance, the following year, when the Russians fought their way across the river Danube, I sent a long four-page sketch of the action to my paper. On returning to Bucharest a few weeks later I happened to walk into Frascati's restaurant for luncheon, when I saw my two friends holding forth to a small crowd over the current number of the *Graphic*. The Italian was pointing his immaculately gloved

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hand at a part of my drawing. "Bah!" he cried, as he glared indignantly through his monocle at de Longlay, "That blazing house being destroyed by the Russians was not there. Just like these English artists, *nom de Dieu!*" I had quietly crept up behind him, unnoticed. "You are quite right, Lazzaro," I said, "it was not there when you and de Longlay arrived, many days after the fight. It was the old Turkish custom house that was stormed by the Russians and burned, just as I sketched it, on the morning of the passage of the Danube."

De Longlay whistled and turned away, humming "Ze poor dog Tray." The Italian flushed red, dropped his pane of glass, and with a wry face, replaced it, gasped, as if he were about to say something, but thought better of it, and quickly followed in the wake of the Frenchman, while the small crowd laughed. I saw him no more.

After parting with my fellow correspondents at Caragugivats, I traveled for three days by country cart through a sunny land with ripening Indian corn and studded with picturesque villages. The porticoes of the cottages reveled in bright colors of paprika pods strung to the eaves. The men, in their long white tunics, with brilliant scarlet skullcaps and belts, worked lazily in the fields, while their womenkind sat spinning on the verandas of the cottages, dressed in the pretty national costume of white gowns embroidered at the breast, and aprons of gorgeous hues. Their children, sunburnt little ur-

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chins, almost nude, played about the compound, and Serb porkers grunted lazily about the highways and byways.

But there was a shadow behind all this peace and sunshine. There was a stern look on the faces of the men as they occasionally stopped in their work and gazed across the plains. For far away over the smiling fields a trailing cloud of lurid dust hung over the main road southward from early dawn to night-fall, which marked the highway leading to death.

The first shots had been exchanged on the frontier and bloody war had begun. As I journeyed night and day that cloud of dust steadily increased, beaten up by legions of Serbian reserves tramping to the front. One afternoon the tide of this living, ceaseless stream swerved out of its course, and from the yellow cloud a line of *arabas*, creaking with their springless gear, crawled toward me along the sun-baked road—some seventy wagons yoked with black buffalo with starch-blue eyes, plodding under their burdens of whimpering, groaning wounded. Beneath rough awnings of grass matting, on litters of straw, men lay writhing in agony or tossing in the throes of fever, the first fruits of war.

On arriving at Ivanitza, a gloriously picturesque old town, with the river Ebar winding past its quaint streets, I left my wagon at an inn and hired a horse to take me up Mount Yavor, which loomed a purple height four thousand feet above the town, and on the summit of which was the Serbian camp.

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Toiling up the mount all day, I arrived at sunset, and that night I slept in my boots, to be ready to march at dawn, for the Serbians were about to invade Turkish territory by advancing on the Moslem town of Sinitza.

Rolled up in my blanket, I lay on the edge of a precipitous slope trending toward the Turkish position. It was a quiet night and the fragrance of the pine trees around me made me heavy with sleep, but for hours I could not close my eyes—for to-morrow I would see my first battle! What would it be like? Should I ever return to my dear ones at home? The moon flooded the mountain and valley and lit up the bayonets of the ever-vigilant sentries as they patrolled the depths of the somber forest clothing the slopes. Tired out with watching the twinkle of the bayonets, I fell asleep at last.

I awoke with some one shaking my shoulder and saying, in very good English: "Here's something hot. We'll soon be at work, and it's bad to start on an empty—what you call—stomacher." And a good-natured officer gave me a steaming mug of coffee.

I sat up and rubbed my eyes. The gray dawn had come and had suddenly changed the whole scene. The slopes of the mountain were alive with busy men rolling up their overcoats and adjusting their accouterments. Some, with rifle in hand, were already trailing through the brushwood toward the forest road crossing the summit of the mountain.

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Presently the blood rushed to my head and every nerve seemed to tingle in my body, as "Crack! Crack! Crack!" came the sound of shots through the keen morning air. Here were rifles spitting in earnest—no spurts of blank cartridges! I was in for it at last.

I hurried to where my horse had been tethered, but he was gone. There was no time to hunt for him, for the battle had commenced. The crackle of rifles was now incessant, so I ran toward the moving infantry, and, catching up with them, marched by the side of the battalions for about an hour, when the men were told to lie down. On our immediate right earth had been freshly turned over, and sticking out from the emplacement were cannon. Presently, some men who had been lying *perdu* sprang to their feet and served the guns. I was about to sketch the quick action when they opened fire, startling and deafening me with their simultaneous crash. As far as I could make out, they were aiming at nothing in particular, for the morning was dull and the smoke formed a perfect fog, long in lifting.

Soon the air was filled with a curious rushing sound, like that of a low-toned foghorn, followed by a terrible explosion and a yellow flash of fire. Then the top of a pine tree on our left flew in splinters. The noise from that mutilated pine was as if a huge tuning fork had been struck, the vibration making the ground tremble where we stood.

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The Turks were returning the fire of our battery and this was their first attempt to get the range. For some time the pines were the only sufferers; therefore I was surprised to see our gunners suddenly limber up and begin to retire. This was done slowly at first, then the horses broke into a trot, and at last, under the lashes of their drivers, galloped furiously toward the road up which we had advanced. I was watching with astonishment this rather—as I thought—premature movement, when my reverie was broken by a sudden rush of infantry coming through the fog of cannon smoke which was now lifting from the earth.

As these men crowded together on entering the forest road, one of the enemy's shells, instead of striking the pines, burst right in the midst of the retreating crowd. Then, for the first time, my eyes were opened to the ghastly realities of war. Before the report of that exploded shell had passed away at least half a dozen poor fellows lay writhing, almost torn to fragments with its splintered segments, drenching the turf with blood. At the sight a faintness crept over me and for a moment paralysis seemed to hold my limbs. But only for a moment, for now the air was charged with a noise like that of the buzzing of mosquitoes or the lash of a fine whip, Whit! Whit! Ping! And then, straight in front of me, a few feet above the ground, little puffs of smoke floated upward like soap bubbles. Behind these puffs of smoke, waving through the scrub like

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poppies in a cornfield, flashed the red fez of the Turk.

There was nothing between me and the enemy but a few bowlders and about a hundred yards of space. "By Jove!" I thought. "It's high time to go," and the moment that idea flashed through me the rapid manner in which I put into execution the old adage, "Discretion is the better part of valor," was truly wonderful.

The Serbian army had been outflanked and was in full retreat—indeed, for a time it seemed to me to be an utter rout. The forestway was crowded with infantry baggage wagons, ambulances, cavalry, and artillery, all hurrying downward, like an angry torrent, arrested for a moment here, then surging up, breaking its way, cutting fresh courses, spreading itself down the precipitous sides to the base of the mountain and thence out upon the plains below.

When night set in a thunderstorm burst upon us, and, as the Turks occupied the summit of the overhanging mountain, we could not distinguish the flash of their guns from the electric glare of the lightning-rifted clouds. It rained in torrents. Several hundred head of cattle, which had been let loose from our camp above, were madly racing through the wood, tossing and goring everything that came in their way, trampling in the slush and mire many of the limping wounded and cowardly stragglers. As the retreat hurried on at certain points of the road, shells burst

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above us, blocking the route with the debris of wrecked carts and mutilated humanity.

For the first experience of war this was indeed passing through a double ordeal of fire and water. So when I rejoined Forbes a week later in the beleagured city of Alexinatz, I felt that I already knew something of campaigning. On reaching that historic Serbian town I found that there was a warm time in the Morava Valley, not only climatically—for the summer was exceptionally hot and oppressive—but with the atmosphere of battle—burning villages and blazing camp fires.

After every sunset during the last week in August a dull-red light flowed over the valley, which, mixing with the rays of the yellow moon, colored the limpid waters of the Morava with blood-red tints. Each day's bloody work added to the night's lurid glow, for the Turks were always victorious and destroyed everything that came in their way as they advanced, proving the truth of the saying, "Where the hoof of the Turkish horse once treads no blade of grass ever grows."

One evening I watched the last shots flicker against the purple background of the darkening hills, spluttering in the gloaming like the flecks of fire from a flint and steel. The Turks were now within a few miles of our camp, and the morrow portended a warmer period still. Far into the night the stretcher-bearers were trailing over the Alexinatz bridge and up through the winding streets with their

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burdens of suffering humanity. Archibald Forbes and I would spend our evenings during this anxious time by trying to give aid to the patient sufferers lying on their litters as they waited their turn outside the schoolhouse of Alexinatz, which was used as a temporary hospital by the English surgeons under their brave and clever chief, Doctor MacKellar.

To-night there was an unbroken line of bearers, stretching down the main street out of the town and away into the open country. Many of the badly wounded had waited since early morn for surgical treatment. Some, growing impatient, had struggled out of their stretchers, or the crowded wagons, and had crawled along the sidewalks toward the schoolhouse till their lifeblood drained from their veins into the gutters. There they lay, some stiff and stark, staring up into the face of the mellow moon. As we slowly walked down the sad procession we would turn aside those already dead to make room for the living to gain the hospital. Forbes and I toiled unremittingly backward and forward on this painful duty till the fires in the valley paled before the stronger light of dawn.

The three or four rooms which constituted the hospital were crowded. There was hardly space for the doctors to work in, and this they had to do by the fitful flicker of a few tallow candles fixed in their congealed grease on the floor. I had been assisting the surgeons by passing the instruments from one room to another, holding a candle, or press-

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ing the hand of some poor creature under operation, until I became faint from the heavy atmosphere and had to leave the room for fresh air. Picking my way through the crowd of wounded on the landing and stairway, I had gained the street entrance, when my leg was plucked at by a poor wretch in the shadow of the portal.

As he lifted his head a moonbeam fell upon a sight I shall never forget. His face—a mere pulp—had been crushed by a fragment of shell and was as black as a negro's with clotted gore. Staring appalled at this gruesome sight, I was roused by his touching my boot, and, slowly lifting his arm, pointing to the lower part of his face. He repeated this action twice before I understood him; then I knelt by his side and poured some brandy from my flask down his throat. He could not express his thanks by word of mouth, but his eyelids trembled, and he lifted his arm again, bringing his hand gradually to the salute. The patience of this soldier in his fearful plight will ever remain in my memory.

During the night a contingent of Russian volunteers arrived with a few officers. Then, when the sun was up, Serbian reinforcements came in from Deligrad. To the blare of bugles and with swinging stride, the troops came tramping down the street. headed by King Milan and his staff. Some of the few remaining wounded of the previous night, still lying in the roadway, aroused themselves for a moment and tried to turn their groans into cheers.

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But the sour-faced monarch took little notice of the greetings of his suffering soldiers; he ignored their salutes and seemed totally indifferent to their plight. Far into the morning the points of the bayonets glittered above the dust cloud as the regiments marched through the town down into the valley—the valley of the shadow of death, indeed, for the smell of powder and blood was everywhere.

Gradually the desultory shots that had been exchanged in the early morning decreased, and for a time a universal quietude reigned, but just before midday the reopening of artillery fire on both sides and the sharp crackle of musketry presaged close fighting.

I had been always easily stirred by some dramatic action in a good play, or the martial strains of a fine band, but the ping of the bullet and the whistle of the shell that day certainly affected me more.

"Plenty of time," said my friend Forbes, noticing my perturbed spirits. "They are just playing up to the grand finale and that's when we ought to be there. Come, sit down now and eat your dinner."

We took our accustomed seats at the little table in the corner of our hostelry, facing the street. As we were beginning our meal, a smiling young Russian with Calmuck-like cheek bones, sandy hair, small, gray eyes, and tip-tilted nose with a pair of blue spectacles perched upon it, looked in at the window. On seeing us he opened the door, walked in,

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bowed, and marched up to our table. He smiled and wiped his pince-nez on the sleeve of his jacket, placed it on the table by his plate, then called for food, and commenced eating.

Nowadays, being an old campaigner, I can put up with almost any kind of eccentricity in the manner of eating, but this little Russian's behavior was, to say the least, nauseating.

My sense of decency was so aroused at his exhibition that I turned to Forbes and said, "That young man will not be a great loss to society if he gets shot this afternoon."

After the Russian had put himself at ease and lodged his goggles on his little sunburnt nose his face widened into a broad grin and he told us that he knew us by repute, that he had only arrived that morning, that he was a brother war correspondent for a Moscow journal, and that he felt highly honored in making the acquaintance of two such distinguished brethren.

In spite of his urbanity and good humor, the uncomfortable sensations he had caused us by his novel use of the fork could not be easily effaced, and we were glad to light our pipes and get once more into the street. The increasing rattle of musketry and booming of guns all through dinner told us that the fight was waxing hotter and hotter. We hastened to the bridgehead, where we found the works bristling with bayonets, for the reserves who had arrived that morning were packed closely there,

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under cover. About half a mile from the bridge we joined MacKellar and his surgeons and jogged along in their ambulance till we came to a favorable spot beside a deserted cottage, where we halted to receive the wounded.

In our immediate front were fields of Indian corn, then a wood stretched from the river on our left flank as far as the hills skirting the right of the valley. Through this wood and close in to the foothills where it passed a village, our road could be traced by occasional puffs of smoke and dust as a shell struck it, or as a mounted orderly scampered along. The fighting was fierce on the other side of the thicket. We could see the branches of the trees stand out in bold relief against the yellow flashes of our artillery on the outer fringe. The little village on our right seemed almost deserted, but lazily hanging in the noontide heat was a Red Cross flag on the roof of one of the houses. A surgeon, whom I joined, was told off to go as far as this hamlet and report the number of wounded. As we began to move parallel to the wood a horseman passed us, waving his arms in recognition and grinning from ear to ear. His horse, a rugged, heavy-boned animal, seemed to be playing cup-and-ball with him, but the rider still held on. It was our recent acquaintance, the Moscow correspondent.

One or two shells from the enemy, missing our artillery, passed over the trees and fell upon the road. One whistled so near to us that we fell flat

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upon the ground. It whisked along into the field on our right and burst in the soft soil. As the mud and the stones were scattered around, more and more did our little Russian's horse seem to play cup-and-ball with his rider, till we lost sight of horse and man as they danced into the village.

On entering the hamlet we found it rapidly filling with wounded, many of whom had maimed themselves by blowing off their trigger fingers. These stumps were freshly blackened with powder, and we could see by the looks of these cowardly creatures and the somber faces of the seriously hurt that the day was lost.

We made our way to the ambulance house. The wounded were being hurried out of the place into country carts which were sent away as soon as filled. To our surprise we found the Red Cross Service worked devotedly by three Russian women, dressed in neat uniforms, with their badge of office painted on their black mackintosh aprons.

Up to their armpits in blood, these plucky little ladies had been carrying on the duty of the hospital all day, and they were now standing at their post, seeing to the safe departure of the wounded. Each moment the noise increased in the main street. Now a gun thundered along, then another, followed by a few civilian fugitives. A shell skimmed over the roof of the hospital, loosening a few tiles, but leaving the Red Cross flag still flying. The Serbians had already commenced the retreat. How soon the

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SERBIAN REFUGEES IN THE FIRST BALKAN WAR

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Turks might be in the place Heaven only knew. I turned to the sisters, lifted my hat, and said:

"Ladies, the enemy is outflanking our position and will probably be in the village in less than half an hour. Let us see you on the road to safety, and leave this business to us," pointing to a few maimed creatures still awaiting transport.

One lady, with top-boots of Hessian cut, short skirt, Cossack jacket, and a pistol slung across her shoulders, touched the little black-silk Montenegrin cap fixed on her mop of frizzly auburn hair, and, after this mock salute, said, sternly:

"Sir, who are you?"

Rather abashed, I stammered out a reply, but without heeding me she continued:

"You are not a soldier. I can see this is no place for you."

"I am a war artist," I stuttered.

"Then, as a non-combatant, seek a place of safety and leave us alone."

Our Moscow correspondent friend had ridden up, and when he heard this remark of his country-woman his miserable stereotyped grin suffused his face, and in my inmost heart I was sorry that his horse had not missed him at cup-and-ball.

The Russian Red Cross ladies stuck heroically to their post. Out of pique we felt obliged to stay and see them off the ground, which was now being swept by the Turkish sharpshooters clearing their front. As we left one end of the village with our

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contingent of wounded, the Turks entered the other. Luckily for us, the Serbs made a bold stand for at least an hour, allowing us to join the line of retreat. We were whirled along in thick clouds of dust, in which, struggling and jumbling, rolled artillery, ambulances, and peasants' carts, crowded with women and their children and their goods and chattels. Suddenly the wheel of a wagon left its axle; down crashed the cart, shooting its contents of household goods into the road. The pots and pans, rolling between the legs of some artillery horses, frightened the poor brutes onto their haunches, and they, backing the gun into a team of oxen, set these animals kicking out right and left, scattering the limping wounded and stragglers. With shrieks, groans, and curses, the seething masses halted for a time, then straggled on, all making for the protection of the reserves at the bridgehead.

On reaching MacKellar's quarters once more I found that Forbes, with great forethought, had, at the commencement of the retreat, turned the doctor's ambulance wagon around toward Alexinatz and was now strongly urging one of the surgeons, young Hare, to hurry up into the vehicle. This surgeon was called "the timid Hare," not for want of pluck—far from that!—but on account of his modest, retiring temperament. He was now busy tying an artery of a wounded soldier, who was still bleeding badly, and would not leave his charge.

"For goodness sake, come along!" cried Forbes.

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"The Turks are now at our side of the wood. Look! Their bullets are drilling holes through the mud walls of the hut."

But still "the timid Hare" hung on to the man's artery. We rushed at the surgeon just as the last turn of the bulldog tourniquet did its work, and Hare and his patient were bundled together into the wagon. In another moment we were being whirled on with the tag-end of the column.

As I looked back along the road I saw the Red Cross flag in the village we had just quitted still flying, but now over the heads of the followers of the False Prophet. Already flames leaped up in several places and a column of black smoke rolled toward the sky. Only a few shells burst on our line of retreat, for the Turkish guns were soon silenced by our heavier artillery at the head of the bridge.

The Moslems did not harass the Serbians further, for night was falling. Unmolested, our jaded column passed over the bridge and up into the town of Alexinatz to repeat the horrors of the previous night. King Milan and his staff had already passed through to his headquarters at Deligrade.

Entering the schoolhouse to see how the wounded were getting on, I discovered a body laid out for burial. The figure seemed, somehow, quite familiar to me. Walking up to the table, I stood dumfounded. There was the little nose, almost black against the livid face. With a quiet smile on his lips lay our Russian friend, the correspondent.

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A handkerchief tied round his throat hid the wound which had caused his death. A stray shot had passed through his neck. A great sadness fell upon me, for he was one of us, after all. I could picture his mother or some dear one waiting anxiously for his return, far away in the heart of Russia.

While I was still in the room two soldiers placed the body on a stretcher, and a Sister of Mercy arranged a few flowers round the little cross on his breast as he was carried out into the street. As he was a civilian, the officials of the Orthodox Church were notified of his death. In rich vestments, four priests and a choir of boys headed the funeral procession, which I followed as it moved off to the little cemetery overlooking the town.

It was almost dark before the service was over. When I returned Forbes had sent off his day's budget of news, and was waiting for me to sit down with him to our evening meal at the inn. I told him of the fate of the little correspondent and my sad journey. Looking steadily at me, he said, "Do you remember your observation about our Russian colleague at this very table this morning?"

The recollection came back to me with painful vividness. "Yes," I sighed. "I remember—I remember."

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Chapter III

THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP SEA

I am ordered to India, but am shunted at Vienna for Turkey—I meet Valentine Baker for the first time—I start on an adventurous journey—I succor a man much against my will and am obliged to beard the lion in his den—I become acquainted with a great American, Januaris Aloysius MacGhan—He recommended me to go to Batac—I find a ghastly state of affairs there—I bring back three trophies and run three narrow risks, but I come out on top.

THOUGH the Serbians continued to put up a very good fight, the Turks were pressing them hard everywhere. The greatest blow to King Milan was the loss of Alexinatz, which fell October 31, 1876. Forbes and I were absolutely the last civilians in the place, and, finding one morning that our lines of communication had been cut by Bashi-Bazouks, the Turkish irregulars, we were compelled to beat a retreat. We dodged the Turkish outposts by taking a mule path through the forest skirting the main road and joined the retreating army at Deligrade. The fall of Alexinatz brought about intervention by the Great Powers and an armistice was eventually proclaimed. As all fighting was over for a time, I made my way back from the Serbian front to Bel-

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grade and wired to my paper for instructions. The reply was, "Prepare to start for India for the Proclamation of the Queen-Empress."

I immediately left the Serbian capital for Vienna. Having kicked my heels for about five days in that gay city, I received notice from my journal that the Indian function had been provided for and that I was to join the Turkish army. From an editorial chair this change meant little, but to me it was a grave proposition, for, after sharing the vicissitudes of the Serbian army for some eight months, suddenly to go over to their enemy was to make a change fraught with no little danger.

But such *bouleversement*, after all, was simply part of a war correspondent's duty, so I returned to the seat of war, this time to join the Turks. The only possibility of getting through with the job was to wipe the slate clean and start on my new venture as a gentleman just out from England and anxious to see some of that wonderful material which is the support of the great Ottoman Empire, the sturdy Turkish fighting-man.

On board the Danubian steamer I chummed in with a bright, smart young Irishman, fresh from Trinity College, Dublin. He was on a journey of adventure, bent on joining either the Serbs or the Turks, and had tossed up to decide the matter. Heads had won, and so had the Turks. At Kalafat, on the Rumanian side of the river, my Irish friend requisitioned a small fishing boat and rowed himself

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across to Vidin, there to join Osman Pasha. This young Irishman was poor Frank Power, who was killed ten years later in trying to escape from Khartum when acting as correspondent for the London *Times*.

At Rustchuk I landed with another acquaintance I had made on the boat, and remained two or three days in that town with the object of seeing the fortifications. An Armenian dragoman, whom we had engaged, told us that there would be no difficulty in obtaining permission and that he would make all arrangements with the officials.

One morning we drove up to the citadel. To our surprise the guard turned out and we were saluted on entering the fortress. Here the colonel in command and his staff showed so much enthusiasm on meeting us that we were almost paralyzed with astonishment. While his troops were mustering for parade he took us around the fortress. We went through every hole and corner of that remarkable stronghold, then we rested and were regaled with coffee and cigarettes; then came the grand finale to this surprising reception, a review of all the available troops, in which we formed the saluting point!

At parting the colonel expressed his thanks for the honor we had done him and his officers and trusted we should go home with a good impression of the Turkish soldier.

When we returned to our hotel we noticed an

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extra politeness on the part of the landlord and his servants, which amused us greatly.

"Well," I thought to myself, "this is extraordinary and at the same time rather unfortunate," as I by no means desired to be made a fuss over or to get into the limelight. After thinking the situation over a bit, I called up the dragoman who had conducted us in the morning and said to him, "What on earth do these people mean by their extraordinary civility and our splendid reception up at the citadel?"

With a cunning smile on his face and rapping his nose with his forefinger, he replied, "I am a very good dragoman."

I nodded assent.

He continued, "I am ze best dragoman in all ze Turkey."

I said: "All right; but go on, you fool. What do you mean?"

"You say you want to see ze fortress. Only most important personage can gain admittance, for it is ze war zat is on. So I say to myself, 'Zese gentlemen must be very big bug; zey must be colonels of ze British army, and also ze M.P.'s, too.' So I went to ze citadel and I told ze commandant.

"Hang it all!" I exclaimed, not without admiration for the fellow's effrontery. "Look at the hole you've placed us in. They will wire to the Embassy in Constantinople, and we shall probably be imprisoned in some filthy Turkish hole, or stood up against a wall and plugged with bullets."

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Still with his cunning smile on his face and shaking his head, "Oh no, you won't, sare," he continued. "I am ze cleverest dragoman in all ze Turkey. I am no fool. I tell zem zat you were traveling what you call *incognito*, on ze secret service of your country."

We had a good time, certainly, but the situation had become too dangerous for us, so we took the evening train for Varna and the next day steamed down the Bosporus and landed in the foul but gloriously picturesque city of the Sultans. Here my difficulties in getting to the Turkish front were to begin. Luckily, however, in those days the names of artists were seldom published below their sketches, so I was known but little even to the English fraternity.

At the club in the Grand rue de Pera I met several interesting personages. One who sat opposite to me nearly every dinner hour was destined to distinguish himself as the savior of the remnant of the Turkish army that was driven back by the Russians onto Constantinople two years later. This officer was under a cloud for the moment—depressed and gloomy. He would talk to me of the impossibility of dealing with the Turkish officials and of the difficulty in organizing their gendarmerie—a service which was his special mission, for my friend of the dinner table was Col. Valentine Baker, formerly of the 10th Hussars.

But another person whom I met in that club,

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probably more interesting to me for the moment, was about to visit the interior of Turkey for the purpose of writing a book—a strange undertaking at this particular moment when the country was up in arms. The Bulgarian atrocities were still rampant and things generally were anything but pleasant. However, this was just the man I wanted to meet, for he had a firman—a Turkish *passe partout.* It was at least a yard in length, and the Sultan's signature to it was as big as one's hand. Now a long *firman* goes a long way with the Turkish official, for, according to the size of the document, so, in those days, were hospitality and politeness meted out to its lucky possessor.

The owner of this precious scroll was a jovial, chubby sea captain, with a face beaming like the sun, ruddy and cheerful. His vigorous, curly hair had a tinge of gray in it, for he had commanded a tramp vessel in the Black Sea during the Crimean War and had supplied the British and Turkish troops with salt beef and potatoes, carrying wounded back to the base of operations. The Turks remembered the man with gratitude for his services in the old days and from the Sublime Porte he had received this three-foot *firman* on the strength of these memories.

This was the man for me. I could not apply for a permit on my own account, considering my recent connection with the Serbians, so I persuaded the jovial sea captain to include me in his passport,

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which he did, as traveling assistant artist to the owner of the document, my name, luckily, not being mentioned at all.

What a time we had in those days! You had simply to be an Englishman and you were received with open arms by the Turkish official, merchant, or peasant. At Adrianople an aide-de-camp from the governor met us. We were billeted on the first merchant of the town, who, with usual Oriental politeness, would come in as we were finishing our evening meal, inquire after our healths, and, with a salaam, assure us that his servants, his horses, and his house were no longer his, but ours. Poor fellow! we found that to accommodate us he was obliged to take up quarters in his harem on the opposite side of the road.

The governor was good enough to place his stables at our disposal, but as they contained full-blooded Arab stallions I visited the sights of Adrianople on foot. My companion, being a sailor, of course took kindly to the horses, but somehow the animals did not reciprocate. When we eventually left Adrianople my friend was almost a cripple, owing to the erratic temper of the governor's chargers.

The misery of Rumelia soon became apparent as we traveled inland. Whole villages had been wiped out and nothing left standing but the brick stacks of chimneys—smoke-begrimed monuments of Turkish oppression and cruelty. Dead bodies, scantily buried, lay in the furrowed fields by the

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roadside, their feet and hands, and sometimes their heads, sticking out of the foul mud. Bashi-Bazouks, with their motley costumes, or Circassians in their quaint astrakhan headgear and long, sober-colored coats, with their breasts studded with silver cartridges, passed us on the road. Behind came their baggage ponies loaded with plunder from the Bulgarian and Serbian villages. They never molested us, however, as we were escorted by a *zaptiah* almost as villainously picturesque as those cutthroats themselves, and we were also known to be Englishmen. For the fiat had gone forth from Constantinople throughout the land that the British were to be respected.

Right up to the old town of Nish wrecked villages lined the gruesome way. How glad was I, for a time, to get out of all this misery and to settle down for a few days in that old frontier town of Turkey.

The English doctors there serving with the Turkish army gave us a good reception, and I found a corner on an ottoman where I could rest my weary head in a room with six surgeons—gallant, plucky volunteers who had been striving to relieve the sufferings of the wretched wounded for the last eight months and who had been living on short commons and more or less pigging it purely for humanity's sake—good fellows all!

One night, while we sat at our meager little meal in our drawing room, dining room and bedroom in one, Barrington Kennett (the late Sir Vincent

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Kennett-Barrington) came in from the Serbian camp across the lines. He was permitted by the Turks to pass through to Constantinople during the armistice, for the purpose of procuring comforts and medical stores for the Serbian wounded. He was astonished to see me at that dinner table, for I had traveled with him for many weeks in Serbia during the early fighting when I was accredited to the army of that state.

"It's all very fine, Villiers, to change about like this," he said, "but you'd better take care. Oh, by the bye, you say you are going to join the Turks who now occupy Alexinatz. You are a good fellow, and I know you'll do me a service. I have a Serbian servant who promised to go with me as far as Constantinople, but he's now in such a deuce of a funk for fear the Turks may do him some mischief that he won't go any farther, and at the same time he is afraid to go back unless his safety is guaranteed. I pity the man, for he volunteered with a good heart, but it has failed him. I must be off after breakfast to-morrow, and I can't look after him. Will you befriend him for my sake?"

"Right you are, Kennett; I'll send him across the frontier into the Serbian lines. Have no fear."

It was a rash promise, though I did not know it at the time. The Serbian was overcome with gratitude, and that, of course, made me all the more firm in my resolve to see him safely into the hands of his countrymen.

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At breakfast next morning, Kennett, who was very jovial, told us some of his experiences in coming through the hostile lines, and then, suddenly looking up at me, he said:

"Oh, by Jove! Villiers, I forgot to tell you that the Turks don't at all love you at Alexinatz. Hafuz Pasha, the governor, has threatened to hang the correspondent of the *Graphic* on sight on account of the bad impression he caused in England by sending a sketch depicting the cruelty of the Turks toward Serbian prisoners; so just you look after yourself."

I was rather irritated that he had not informed me of this uncharitable feeling on the part of the governor of Alexinatz before asking me to take his servant across the lines beyond that very city.

I thought it only fair to tell my sea-captain friend of the risk I was running, but that sturdy old seaman, in spite of squalls ahead and probably very dirty weather, tacked round to my view of the situation and lent me the kindly cover of his talismanic firman.

At eight the next morning we faced the dreary plain between Nish and Alexinatz. The air was crisp with frost and the little puddles in the rough road with their thin covering of ice cracked as our horses cantered over them.

Toward evening we sighted the quaint tower of the orthodox church of Alexinatz and the familiar trenches and redoubts girding the city, behind

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which, only a few weeks earlier, I had watched the bloody advance of the Turks up the Morava Valley. My heart was beating fast as I crossed the little wooden bridge over the Morava into the town. Our horses were covered with hoarfrost, for the last ruddy flash of sunlight had left us when still a mile short of the outskirts. The puddles had filmed over with ice again, and the tired animals, after floundering in the deep ruts of the abominable road, were now limping with bleeding hoofs up the main street toward the governor's dwelling.

Every house had been looted. Doors and window frames had been taken for firewood, and iron, copper, or metal of any kind torn away from the crazy structures, so that it seemed to require but a puff of wind to send them tumbling like a pack of cards to the ground. Horses were stabled in the hotel where Forbes and I took our last meal before the fall of Alexinatz, and in the center of the roofless, gutted building was a roaring fire built up of the doors and rafters, and a party of wild Bashi-Bazouks were carousing round the blaze.

The news of the arrival of the two strangers soon spread. But though the town was alive with cut-throats and ruffians, the irregular troops of a Turkish army, we were not molested, but, on the contrary, were treated with deference and consideration. The magic of the yard-long *firman* had traveled before us. The rest of the way to the governor's house was lighted by the glare of the burning panel

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of a door steeped in oil. But there was no need of a guide for me, as I knew every inch of the ground and every corner of the building, the wine cellar included. I wondered if there was still any Negotin left—an excellent vintage from the Serbian province of that name.

"Three steps here, sir," said our dragoman, as we ascended the stoop in front of the *konak*. I laughed in my sleeve—as if I didn't know! I remembered one moonlight night when good Negotin wine annihilated those steps and— But no matter.

"The governor, His Excellency Hafuz Pasha, will be glad to receive the distinguished visitors," softly said an effeminate-looking Circassian aide-de-camp as we entered the hall.

My heart stood still for a second. Hafuz was the man who had threatened to curtail my existence. "Well," I thought, "I am in for it now." I was hungry, weary, and cold, and I resolved that I would have some supper first, anyway. I took off my hat, and followed the aide-de-camp into a room whose two windows opened in French fashion on a balcony facing the street. Ah! Didn't I remember that same balcony—the summer nights of August, the little Serbian Red Cross sister, and the gallant young English surgeon, the shadow of the purple grapes from the vine overhead, the disturbed kiss, and the chaff the wicked young dog received from us afterward. Alas! the unsympathetic Turk had made charcoal of the vine. The metal balustrade

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of the balcony was probably being made into slugs wherein to bring down the brethren of the little Red Cross sister. Mats and sacking stuffed in the cavities that once were windows could not keep the bitter grip of the frosty night out from the room. so we remained in our furs as we stood before the famous pasha.

On a packing case sat the Turkish commander, bent forward, chafing his hands over a charcoal brazier. On another trunk by his side was a tallow candle stuck in its grease on a slab of wood. A camp table, chair, and stool made up the rest of the furniture. He rose to his feet as we moved toward him, and at once waved to the chair and stool for us to be seated. A little man was Hafuz, with a kindly smile on his face. Blue-eyed and fresh looking, he was not more than fifty years. A fluffy beard tinged with gray gave him the aspect of a well-to-do merchant rather than a warrior.

"You must be both tired and hungry, gentlemen," he said. "I have nothing to give you but chops and tea, and these I have already ordered the cook to prepare for you."

The Pasha spoke in French, so I became interpreter for my friend, who knew even less than I of that language. I was in for it now. I durst not hesitate.

"Pasha," I cried, "if you had anticipated our desires you could not have been kinder. The meal you kindly offer us is English, and we will do

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justice to your hospitality in good time. My respected employer here," pointing to the sea captain, who nodded, and smiled urbanely, "with whom I am associated in this *firman* of His Glorious Majesty the Sultan—whom may the Prophet preserve" (here I unrolled the document to the Pasha's gaze)—"are travelers in search of material for a book on the glories of the great Turkish Empire. On our journey upcountry we met an Englishman named Kennett."

Here the Pasha, who had been yawning and nodding over the brazier, brightened up, and a keen look came into his eyes.

"Yes, I know the gentleman. He came from the Serbians with instructions from the Seraskierat that he should be permitted to pass through the lines."

"Well," I continued, "he had with him a Serbian servant. This man is a timid fool. He got as far as Nish, and there he began to tremble for his safety. To his mind, in every shadow some one lurked to do him harm, till he prayed to be sent back. Then he began to tremble again, for how could he return without safe conduct? Kennett was on the horns of a dilemma in regard to him and so he begged us to take charge of the creature, as we were coming this way. What creatures these Serbians must be," I added, "if this fellow is a specimen!"

"The man shall be sent back to-morrow. Con-

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sider him no longer a burden to you. He is in my charge," replied the Pasha.

"Your Excellence!" I cried. "Oh! you don't know what manner of man this person is! He would die from sheer fright if he left our side. No; with your permission, I will accompany him to the Serbian lines."

"It's a long journey," said the Pasha, "and dangerous, too; for to-morrow is the last day of the armistice, and we can't tell when the first shot may be fired again. Leave the man to me."

"Let me go, Pasha. Never mind my safety. I will run the risk. It will also be an opportunity to see something of these Serbians. We have read about them in England, and we have given our word to Kennett. Allow us to keep it."

"Then one shall go. Choose between you. You English are curious people." And the Pasha laughed. "See now, your food is here." So we sat down and devoured our chops and tea, while the hospitable Pasha smiled and smoked.

What hour to-morrow for departure, Excellency?" I said, as my companion and I rose to depart. "The lot has fallen to me."

"At eight o'clock a *parlementaire* shall be at your service. Good night."

The aide-de-camp saw us to our room, and we shivered ourselves to sleep.

The morning broke gloomily enough, the air portended snow, and before I had passed the last sen-

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tries of the Turks a brisk wind skimmed the road right into the faces of our party. Toward midday our escorting officer became distressed regarding the nonappearance of the Serbians.

We were gradually congealing, as we could not advance out of a walk, for, being in the neutral zone, we were within shot of either side.

Presently some indistinct shadows were seen on the road ahead. Our bugler was ordered to sound a call. When he placed the mouthpiece of his instrument to his lips he could not pucker them for blowing; his mustache was frozen stiff. The officer shook his sword at him. It was of no use—the bugle was dumb. The shadowy figures on our front now showed black against the snow, and were falling into skirmish line.

"They are preparing to fire! Sound the call!" shouted the officer as he pummeled the unfortunate bugler, who strove in vain to blow. I also became interested in the proceedings and wanted to hide myself behind something. Those men in front were clearly meaning to fire; some were brushing the snow aside with their feet to take a firmer stand. We rubbed the bugler's mouth with snow and let him have another try. This time an unmistakable squeak trembled on the air. One of the audacious Serbians in the advance, who was possibly about to commit murder by shooting one of our number, stayed his trigger hand and, placing it to his ear, listened. We urged our trumpeter once more, and

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to our delight a clear blast thawed out of his instrument. At this the Serbians retired and were lost to view in the whirling snow.

Presently a strong body of Serbians surrounded us and marched us into their camp. The outpost consisted of numerous dugouts—semisubterranean holes thatched with reeds from the river bank. Into one of these caverns we were invited, and soon were huddled round a log fire in the center of the shanty. The Serb officer in command was profuse in his thanks to us for bringing home his countryman, and told us that he had already sent off notice of our arrival to General Peterhof, in command at Deligrad. At this my heart sank within me, for I was aware that Peterhof knew me well by sight. Doubtless I should be taken for a renegade and shot, probably not officially, but accidentally, and the distinguished Order of the Takova sent to my people to soothe their grief and to express the sorrow of the Serbian government at my untimely but heroic end.

Luckily, our Turkish officer was already green with jealousy that the Serbians should possibly impress me with their amiability. "We must be back before the night is far advanced," said he, and I earnestly fostered his anxiety, for the Turkish staff of Hafuz was to entertain me that night at dinner. But to wait the return of the orderly from Deligrad was almost imperative. We were now in the hands of the Serbians and must affect some civility. At

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last the snorting of a horse at full gallop on the road told us the messenger was nigh. In another moment, puffed and blown, and digging the snow from his eyes and ears, the orderly stepped into the hut and told his message.

"The general," he said, "wishes the Englishman to stay the night at Deligrad. The *parlementaire* may go back, and if hostilities recommence in the interim, the Englishman shall have a safe-conduct through Serbia."

I clung to the Turkish *parlementaire* in spite of the general's proffered hospitality. The Serbian I had befriended evinced his gratitude by effusively kissing my hand again and again, and we then hurried back into the neutral zone.

Before night had well set in my sailor friend and I were enjoying the hospitality of the Pasha's officers, and next morning found us returning to Nish after many cordial expressions from my would-be executioner of my pleasant visit and hopes that I would renew it. After due consideration of this matter, I eventually came to the conclusion that I would not. For one of the few Latin quotations I remember seemed to write itself in the snow—*Nusquam tuta fides.*

After making my way back to Constantinople, I met one night at the Viscountess Strangford's hospital at Tartar Bazarjik the famous American war correspondent for the New York *Herald*, the late Januarius Aloysius MacGhan, who had recently

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filled all Europe with horror at his powerful descriptions of the atrocities perpetrated on the Bulgarians by the Bashi-Bazouks. He was very keen on my seeing the village of Batac, where nearly the whole of the inhabitants had been wiped out by the Turks. He so impressed me with his dramatic story that I decided to make the journey into the mountains in spite of the bitterness of the weather.

I spent the night before I left with a philanthropic Englishman who had come out, like the viscountess, to disburse funds collected in England for the purpose of erecting shelters for the houseless Bulgarians. As we sat down to dinner in his cheerless little hut I noticed certain bottles in the corner of the room that gave at once an atmosphere of comfort to the place. "Ah!" said he, noting the direction of my glance, "that's of my own growing—"

"You make this champagne yourself?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, filling my tumbler with the sparkling beverage. "It's a very light wine manufactured for my personal use. I am glad you seem to like it. I shall be most happy if you will permit your servant to pack three bottles in your kit when you start to-morrow. Their contents will cheer and warm you on your cold journey up the Balkans."

I expressed my reluctance in reducing his store by such a quantity, but my host's persuasive manner was overpowering, and I easily succumbed—the more so as it was rare to find sparkling wine of such excellent quality in Rumelia.

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"You need not be afraid to take it," continued my friend. "I have plenty. The wine does not cost me more than fifty cents a bottle, even when delivered in this ramshackle old slum of Tartar Bazarjik."

"Very well," I replied; "I will drink your good health to-morrow night in Batac. By the bye, about this modern Golgotha—this dismal town of blood and murder. Are the stories true, or are they tinted with something more than local color?"

"My dear fellow," said my host, with a serious expression on his face, "you will find the accounts of Turkish brutality and Bulgarian suffering true enough. More than two-thirds of the population of Batac have been ruthlessly butchered. Men, women, young girls, and little children have been slain. Their bones still strew the streets and alleys of the town, and the blood of many yet smears the walls of the old church, where, in their terror, they sought sanctuary in vain."

"Enough for to-night," cried I. "Say no more my dear sir, or I shall not sleep, and I must be up betimes."

As I rose from my chair my companion enjoined on me not to forget an engagement to dine with him the evening of my return.

"The *kirmakan*, the mayor, and the corporation are especially invited to meet you," he added; "so you must not disappoint us."

"Rely on me," I replied. "That is, of course, if

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I find the objects of which I am in search—the types of Bulgarian skulls which, you may remember, I told you I promised to procure for my surgeon friend in old England."

"Have no fear about that," sighed my host. "You will find in one hour enough to stock the surgical schools of Europe."

I was soon rolled up in my furs on the ottoman in my room. Luckily I dreamed of sunny vineyards and my friend's good wine. No sickening nightmare of Bulgarian horrors disturbed my slumbers and I was wakened by my servant stirring up the live charcoal from the well of the metal brazier standing in the center of the room, to cook the morning coffee.

"Light another candle, Mustapha," I cried. "And in packing, take care of those bottles with the silver corks—the Frankish sherbet water. See the straw is thick around their sides, good Mustapha. If you break them, by the beard of the Prophet I'll—"

My sentence was cut short by mine host of the previous evening shouting from an adjacent room: "Don't forget the third night from now. You dine with me, remember. Good-by and good luck."

The packing was soon done. Two hours before the gray dawn stole over the plains we were well on our way toward the Balkans. The shrill cry of the muezzins from the minarets of Bazarjik, calling all good Moslems to early prayer, pierced the frosty air when we came to our first halt, and I

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tumbled out of my rugs to inspect our modest cortege.

A *zaptiah*, or Turkish mounted policeman, acted as our guide and protector. He was a picturesque individual, wearing a Zouave jacket and wide trousers of blue cloth embroidered with red braid. A cummerbund of red silk encircled his waist. Strapped round this was a leathern belt crowded with deadly weapons, making him a veritable stalking armory. A pair of richly mounted flintlock pistols were stuck in the upper pockets of the belt; below was a yataghan of ivory, studded with red coral bosses, and a Winchester repeating carbine hung across his shoulders. A fez with narrow turban bound tightly round his head also inclosed his ears to keep them from frost bite, giving him, with his piercing black eyes and clean-cut nose, a rakish, dare-devil appearance. Abdullah, for that was his name, was mounted on a lean though high-spirited horse of vicious aspect, due to the mutilation of one of his ears.

An Italian photographer had volunteered to go with me on this journey. With his apparatus we were ensconced in a carriage used generally for the purpose of shifting the ladies of the Turkish harems from one house to another. It was a gimcrack sort of an affair, built of thin wooden battens with gilt panels and looking-glass. We had to squat *à la Turque* on the floor, as there was not head room to sit upright. This vehicle was drawn by two wiry little steeds. Following us came my Armenian ser-

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vant on a gayly caparisoned mule, looking almost as truculent as the guard with his yataghan and a revolver.

Soon the little village wherein we were to stop for breakfast gradually stood apart, with the early morning sun upon it, from the foothills of the mountains; and as the shadows of our caravan began to grow smaller our advance guard disappeared in the windings of the main street of the hamlet.

In a few minutes our wagon halted in the courtyard of its principal khan, where we left it till we returned from the snowy uplands. For the mountain journey we took to the saddle and slowly toiled up through the passes till the setting sun began to flush the snow with crimson.

On arriving on the Balkan plateau we found that Batac was almost lost to sight in the last fall of snow; only a few of its blackened ruins broke the purity of the drifts. The fugitives that had returned to their ruined town sheltered themselves from the bitterness of the weather in the cellars, or built shanties with the debris of their demolished houses. In the gloom of the departing day these unhappy people would steal to the half-gutted church, the remaining walls of which were still greasy with the blood of the slain, and in the ghastly flicker of a few tallow candles stuck on the flags they would pray or bewail the fate of their dear ones.

Our destination was the wooden building called the hospital, erected in the market place by the late

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Viscountess Strangford. Here we found life, comfort, and shelter for the night. Owing to the recent fall of snow, which lay many feet deep, it was a difficult matter to find the types of Slav skulls for my surgeon friend, so I told my dragoman to start the villagers on the quest.

Early next morning, when seated at breakfast, my servant appeared and whispered: "It's all right, sir. I think I have got what you require." I immediately jumped up and hurried outside, where I discovered several old ladies gathered together in front of the hospital, holding out their capacious aprons, each containing two or three heads. At first I was much shocked—even horrified—at the grimness of this wholesale fulfillment of my request. But I reflected that business was business, so I commenced negotiating with these ancient female ghouls by picking and choosing. At last I decided on three fine specimens. These lady philosophers cheerfully parted with the heads of their decapitated neighbors for two piasters each, equivalent to ten cents in our coin. The nurses of the hospital made me a sack, in which the grim relics were packed.

Toward midday we commenced our return journey to Bazarjik. In an hour we were leaving the plateau and beginning to descend the mountain. Our *zaptiah* guard was leading; behind came the Italian and my servant. Slowly following, I had started a cigarette and, deep in thought, was enjoying the

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fragrance of the Turkish tobacco, when my reverie was rudely broken by my horse pricking up his ears and starting to trot down the pass. The brute had been lagging, and with the best intention was trying to make up for lost time.

This, however, is occasionally disastrous to a rider on a packsaddle. The girths were loose, and presently the gear began to sway to and fro, and I with it. I was swathed in furs, the weather was bitterly cold, and my feet were plugged into the stirrup irons with straw. I tried to keep my equilibrium, but the saddle slipped under the horse's belly and I found myself upside down, trailing through the snow. My horse, realizing at last that something was wrong, luckily came to a standstill. My companions, arrested by my shouts, returned and extricated me from my novel position.

This was not much of an accident, but I became a little nervous when I discovered the cause of losing my balance was the sack of trophies tied to the pommel of my saddle. I was stricken with a sudden chill, and for the first time flashed through me the thought that these human heads were weird things to travel with. I shook myself and whistled, not for want of thought, but for thinking. I tried to take an interest in the frozen scenery about, but no, a depression fell on me like a pall, which I tried in vain to shake off; a superstitious dread of further evil came over me.

"Well," I mused, looking at the sack, "you are

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for scientific purposes—will perhaps grace the walls of some surgical museum or hang in the corner of an artist's studio. You will be better off far than lying rotting in the snow.

But it was no use; I could not comfort myself. An inner voice seemed to whisper: "Behold the mystic number three. For each head you have taken from its native place an accident will befall you to-day. You may chalk up Number One; now look out for Number Two." Each time I felt inclined to cut that sack and its uncanny contents adrift, this absurd idea got my blood up. I resolved to stick to my trophy, come what might.

I pushed on in front with the intention of giving my horse no further chance to lag. Our guard was still leading. The sky was leaden and lowering. The silence of the mountain region was overpowering, as if every sound lay dead beneath the winding sheet of snow. Presently a dull beating of wings was heard, and up from the valley sailed a huge eagle. I turned to gaze at the majestic bird. When I looked ahead again our guide had disappeared. Where on earth had he got to? There was the road straight in front of me.

I was still moving on. Before I could speak or check him my horse stepped off into space. I pulled madly at the bridle; the animal simply pawed the air. I went rolling over and over, becoming gradually disengaged from the saddle. Then all was darkness. I found myself sinking into some soft depth.

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An icy coldness came over me and I discovered I was in a snow hole which I had made in falling through a drift. I had simply ridden over a precipice and dropped through thirty feet of space into a snow pack which saved me from breaking my bones on the rocks beneath.

There was a great snorting and kicking a few yards from me, and my horse arose, panting, from his downy bed. My companions had drawn themselves up on the edge of the declivity above me and were merry with laughter at my expense. Anyhow, I had the advantage, for I had stolen a march on them by making a short cut, though a precipitous one, to the road below. Our *zaptiah*, when I missed him, had taken a narrow pass to the left, gaining the main road farther down.

As I dug the snow out of my ears and eyes I could not help thinking that this little incident must be intended for accident Number Two; and when I readjusted the sack in front of my saddle I was more and more determined to stick to my trophies.

On arriving at the foot of the Balkans we discarded the horses for our harem wagon. It was late in the afternoon and we were not more than three miles from the village when darkness settled over the plain. The wind freshened into a hurricane and blinding snow flurries swept over us. My driver wished to turn back, for the whole white mantle covering the Maritza Valley began shifting. I insisted on an advance. Was I not to dine in

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Bazarjik that night? I would not keep my friend and his Turkish guests waiting.

After a short palaver, in which our *zaptiah* joined, enforcing the argument by ominously touching the hilt of his pistols, our coachman sulkily lashed his horses into a gallop. Shortly the cart began to sway with the furious pace we were making. Without any warning the right wheels suddenly sank and the vehicle quickly turned over. I found myself sitting up in a frame of splintèrs. I clenched my teeth and savagely hunted for those heads. I found them intact. As the Italian and I shook ourselves free of the glass and tinsel of that carriage I felt as if a great load had been lifted from my heart. Here was accident Number Three, and I was safe and sound.

When we had placed what was left of our gear on the floor of the wagon—for the splintered glass and panels had been whirled away in the gale—we could discover no trace of our road. It had been entirely obliterated. I now came to the conclusion that my friend and his *kirmakan* would grow hungry if they waited dinner for me that evening. We wandered about, cutting our way through the drifts simply to keep from falling into that lasting slumber which surely overtakes one if once the senses become benumbed.

In the early morning, wolfhounds of a Bulgarian village signaled our approach, and the inhabitants, by placing out flaring torches, guided us to their

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huts. Almost dead with cold, hunger, and fatigue, we fell eagerly upon the black bread and hot plum brandy placed before us. We presently thawed out and were soon sound asleep by the side of a maize-cone fire.

Later in the day the storm ceased. We were put on our right track and eventually found our way to Tartar Bazarjik, where I discovered that though my philantropic friend's turkey had been spoiled by overcooking, waiting dinner for me, his guests, in spite of being Mussulmans, had gone home satisfied and merry under the influence of their host's sherbet water.

The heads were packed and sent on their way to London *via* Constantinople, addressed to my surgeon friend at King's College Hospital, labeled "Bulgarian atrocities."

They arrived safely in England and, for all that I know, may have figured on many a platform at those indignation meetings which at that time set the whole civilized world agog.

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Chapter IV

A JOB IN A GROCERY STORE

I become a commercial traveler and visit Rumania—I am engaged as a shopman and cross the frozen Pruth—Am terrified by the presence of the Great White Tsar—I recover from the shock and make sketches of his army, and return safely with probably the most interesting budget I ever collected for my paper—I receive a birthday gift from the Russian ambassador at the Court of St. James's—I am present at the firing of the first shot.

THE armistice between Serbia and Turkey developed finally into a peaceful settlement of their differences. Therefore I made up my mind, on returning to Constantinople, to penetrate as far as I dared into Russia, to find out if the many rumors of the Tsar mobilizing his troops were true. I immediately shifted my quarters from the Bosporus across the Danube to Bucharest.

Of course I had to be very wary on approaching Russia at this moment, when the tension between that country and England over Near-Eastern affairs was becoming acute; so, first of all, I made my way to Jassy, the town nearest to the river Pruth, which was then the Russo-Rumanian frontier. It was necessary to drop my former connections, for if

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it were discovered that I had anything to do with the press my case would be hopeless and probably my immediate arrest would ensue. I therefore thought it would be wise to change my coat, and I became, instead of a man of war, a commercial traveler, or drummer. On arriving at Jassy I put up at the Hotel Binda. In the smokeroom of the place well-to-do city men used to congregate of an evening. Among them was a burly-looking Swede who seemed to lead the conversation on most topics. He saw at once that I was an Englishman and took great pride in airing his knowledge of the English tongue before his brethren in trade.

We grew quite friendly, and after the convivial meetings at the hotel, I would walk back with him to his little store. We talked of the recent atrocities in Bulgaria, the attitude of England, the possibilities of war, and the certainty that Russia was already moving large bodies of infantry, cavalry, and artillery toward the frontier.

One night I told him my real object in coming to Jassy, and asked him to assist me in crossing the Russian frontier.

"Well," he replied, "that's not such a difficult matter. It's the getting back, my friend, which you will find not quite easy."

"Let me get across and I will manage to wriggle back," I laughed.

"Just as you like. You English are always up to some adventure. But," he continued, "if I assist

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you, you must do exactly what I tell you or you will possibly come to grief, and perhaps ruin me as well.

"First of all, I will take you on here as my assistant. You must look after my shop for a few days and pretend to take a keen interest in the business as the man at the counter."

This I agreed to do, but it was the part of the arrangement I did not relish, for the Jassy store resembled an ordinary English cheesemonger's, with an oil-and-color-man's thrown in. Pickled fish, onions, and dried caviar sweated in close proximity to Limburger cheese, sauerkraut, and many other rank-smelling delicacies which made the atmosphere sharp and spicy, and caused me to feel very bilious. Smoking was, mercifully, not prohibited by my employer, so the fumes of the pungent weed which was between my lips all day made the atmosphere of the shop a little more tolerable.

When my good friend thought I had been associated with him long enough, he set about his quarterly journey to Odessa to replenish his depleted store and took me with him as his clerk. It was a dull, gray, winter's morning when the Pruth was reached. The ice on the river was already two feet thick, and the peasants, with their sleighs laden with goods, were creaking and jolting over the rough, frozen floes and winding up the opposite bank toward the little log customhouse. The Swede enjoined me to keep close to him, but there was no necessity for

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this advice. I stuck to him like a leech, for he held the all-important passport, the lack of which on this jealously guarded frontier meant detention and perhaps imprisonment for many a day. We were all herded like cattle for a time, and then allowed to file through into the little passport office, where vigilant Muscovite *douanier* eyed us narrowly before returning our papers. I happened to have an unlit cigarette between my lips, which the officer, when restoring my friend's passport, immediately noticed. He at once struck a heroic attitude and, stretching out his right hand, said, in stentorian tones, in Russian:

"It is forbidden to smoke in the presence of the Tsar."

This was interpreted to me by my friend. The other travelers in the little office looked with blanched faces at my unheard-of audacity. I blushed scarlet and then felt myself grow cold. How was it that my friend had not told me of the close proximity of so august a personage as the Great White Tsar. This piece of presumption on my part, I thought, probably meant the mines of Siberia at least. Staggered by the prospect of this awful calamity, I still held the cigarette between my fingers.

"Heedless dolt!" cried the officer, now flushed with anger.

I stood stunned as the enormity of my crime dawned on me.

"Drop the cigarette," whispered my friend. Once

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more the officer roared, "You must not smoke in the presence of the Tsar."

Fearing to turn my head, I followed his outstretched arm with my eyes only, and there, on the stucco wall, I descried a wretched German oleograph portrait of Alexander the Second.

I came quickly to my senses and began to titter with laughter. Presently I found myself outside the passport office, my Swedish employer having hustled me out of the presence of the irate Russian officials, intimating to them, with profuse apologies, that I was a little weak in the head.

"Be more careful, friend," whispered my companion. "Suppress your mirth, for you are among a serious people who look upon their ruler as next to the Great Redeemer. You may smoke now; it will quiet your nerves and probably stop that infernal grin of yours." For I was still merry over that ghastly oleograph.

When we arrived at Kishenev, according to my friend's instructions, I put up at the Hotel St. Petersburg while he went on to Odessa. Meantime I found plenty of work for both pen and pencil, as the place was packed with soldiers of all arms.

Now that I had arrived in this Russian city the difficulty was for me to do any work. A sketchbook was out of the question; suspicion would be aroused at once, and I should be arrested and practically lost for months to my paper. I had to fall back on my thumbnails and shirt cuffs instead, and terribly

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cold work it was in that bitter atmosphere, for the mercury was down far below zero and trees on the boulevard were sparkling with their covering of frost. But for the warmth of the steaming tea houses many a time I think I should have frozen stiff in the streets. The keen winds would pierce almost the thickest furs, and the cold blast froze my hair stiff and coated my mustache with a fringe of snowy icicles, when I would rush into a tea house and thaw myself in its heated atmosphere, where from far below zero one was suddenly plunged into a temperature of seventy degrees Fahrenheit. These places of entertainment were mostly kept by Jews. The walls were hung with cheap German colored prints of battle scenes, in which the Russian troops were always victorious, and in all the rooms was the portrait of the Tsar, which everybody saluted on passing. Lively tunes were wound out of a huge musical machine taking up one end of the principal saloon, which produced all the noise of a German band. The place was reeking with the fumes of Russian leather and rum, for that spirit, with citron and sugar, was always served along with each pot of tea.

The concentration of troops on the Pruth was a veritable mobilization for active service. The forces already about Kishenev were being augmented every day by fresh detachments of infantry and cavalry and batteries of artillery, all converging on the road which led to Constantinople. Like a

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dammed-up river, fed by numerous little streams, ever swelling in volume, on the verge of breaking into flood, was this great army, making ready to pour itself into Rumania and deluge Turkey.

My visit to Kishenev was repaying me for my trouble, and after each day's work I would return to my hotel and dine comfortably, feeling well satisfied with myself when I collected my notes from my thumb and cuffs and transferred them to my sketchbook, for I had been in the place three days and was not even suspected. Hitherto I had always managed to take my meals alone, to avoid conversation. One night, however, when I had the table, as usual, to myself, I noticed that my loneliness was attracting attention. Some officers at an adjacent table were looking intently in my direction. I grew hot all over and kept my eyes busy on the food before me. Presently I felt that one of them was crossing to my table, and a moment later I was sensible of a tall, gaunt figure standing at my side.

"Ye'r an Englishmon," the tall figure whispered, but with the unmistakable accent of the denizens of the Land o' cakes.

I lifted my eyes to the face of a man about six feet two, with large blue eyes and a big yellow beard, who was dressed in a Russian infantry uniform.

"Pray sit down," I replied. "Yes, I am an Englishman, and, by Jove! you're a Scotsman, and wearing a uniform we Britons do not usually love. How is it?"

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"A'weel," answered the Scot, "though in Russian uniform." "I am not a fighting man, but a paymaster, and there are many more of my countrymen so employed. We have good money and an easy time. However, I am still a Briton, though I have been in the Russian service for twenty years. I would not be naturalized and don't ever intend to become a Russian, and that is why I was so glad to meet a Britisher. Now what are you doing here? My Russian friends at the other table are rather suspicious and want to know who and what you are."

"Can I trust you?" I whispered.

He nodded his head.

"Then, my newly made friend, they must not know who I am, or I shall be imprisoned or sent back to Rumania sooner than I desire. I am a newspaper correspondent."

He gave a gasp of surprise. "How on earth did you get across the frontier?"

"Listen. Ask the waiter for another packet of cigarettes and some more kümmel, there's a good fellow, and I will tell you my story."

After I had finished he chuckled to himself. "You deserve to get out of this," said he. "I will rejoin my friends and allay their suspicions. Have no fear, but take my advice—clear off as soon as you can."

As luck would have it, my Swede arrived from Odessa by the last train that evening. At ten the next morning we recrossed the frontier. On the

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same afternoon we were safely in Jassy, and by the night mail I was on the way to England with probably one of the most important budgets of sketches and correspondence I have ever collected for my paper.

The inevitable came quickly enough. I was at home only a couple of months before Russia, knowing England would stay her hand, owing to the attitude of Mr. Gladstone and his bitter enmity toward the "assassin on the throne," took the chance of declaring war against the Turk—ostensibly on the behalf of Bulgaria, but not a little on her own. I hurried at once to the Russian Embassy to get a letter of introduction to the military authorities in St. Petersburg. I sent in my card to Count Schouvaloff, the urbane and courteous Muscovite ambassador, who was at home, just finishing his coffee and rolls, and would see me in a few minutes.

"What can I do for you?" he asked.

"Well, Your Excellency, a good deal. I desire a letter from you to the Russian military authorities. I want to be with that army when it invades Turkey. I have been with the Serbian forces during the recent campaign."

"Yes," he nodded. "I have seen your sketches in the *Graphic*. But I can do nothing for you, I am sorry to say. Only this morning I received this letter from my government, telling me not to give any more letters to the representatives of the British press."

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I was so upset at this news that I was compelled to sit down and could almost have cried with vexation. Here was my career suddenly come to an end at the most critical moment, for the Serbian war was simply the *lever de rideau;* the first act of the real drama was about to begin and I, apparently, would not be in it. The amiable ambassador, seeing my distress, said, "I really think you ought to go, for I am certain that our general staff know your work; but what am I to do?

"Ah!" he suddenly cried, "I have it. Of course, this letter ought to have been delivered to me to-morrow. I was not supposed to be at the Embassy this morning. It is, therefore, more or less unofficial."

I sprang to my feet. I felt inclined to embrace him in true Russian fashion by kissing him on both cheeks.

With a joyous laugh, he continued, "I can, after all, give you a note to-day."

He rang a bell, his secretary answered it, then a few words in Russian, and some minutes later a letter was in front of him which he signed, with a smile, and passed to me. Then a handshake and "*Bonne chance,*" and I was out on the street with the most welcome birthday present I ever received, for it happened to be the 23d of April, my natal day, and St. George's for Holy Russia and Merry England, too—the day the Russians crossed their frontier into Turkey and set the ball rolling in 1877.

I left by the night's mail for Rumania and met

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the Russian army as its advance guard crossed the river Pruth. I saw the first shot fired into Briela from a Turkish monitor on the Danube. It went through the mud wall of a house and, unexploded, stuck its nose in the back-yard soil. With that single shot Russia and Turkey were at each other's throats, and the struggle became bloody enough before the end.

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Chapter V

THE BATTLE OF PLEVNA

Feasting with the Tsarevitch, not wisely, but too well, I return under guard —My pony faces his first fire—Forbes and I start to find the Russian army—A cold reception—Fasting and fighting—We find the former less exciting than the latter—A Franco-Russian acquaintance—The Russian advance on Plevna—The morning mist—The battle panorama —My pony is restless—Our high hopes are wrecked—The retreat—I am given up for lost—My race for the mail—I return intact, but am taken for a spook—Soldiers and artists—A prince for a guide.

THE last days of the month of July, 1877, were for me full of adventure. For the fourth week opened with a banquet and closed with probably the bloodiest battle of the campaign, and I was present at both.

When His Imperial Highness the Tsarevitch arrived in Briela to take over the command of the army of the river Lom, the generals of its respective brigades gave a grand banquet in his honor, and I happened to be the only correspondent in camp at the time. With their usual courtesy to foreigners, the Russian officers invited me to the feast.

We dined in a large marquee, in the corner of which was a table spread, *à la russe*, with caviar,

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anchovies, dried herrings, gherkins, and eggs. That potent spirit, vodka, was taken as an appetizer.

On the arrival of the Tsarevitch I was presented to him, and he at once courteously took me to the side table, where we ate an egg and drank a glass of vodka together. He then bade one of his aids, who spoke English more fluently than himself, take charge of me. We sat down to dinner—some fifty officers—at a long table in the center of the tent, groaning with good cheer. In fact, French cooks had come all the way from Bucharest, loaded with delicacies supplied by the best restaurateurs of "the little Paris of the East." The wines were of the choicest French and Rhenish brands, and there was also the *vin du pays*, red and white, in large earthernware jars.

We commenced the meal with the *zakuska* at the sideboard about noon. At 3 P.M. we arrived at the tea-and-coffee stage. The sun beat with an almost tropical intensity through the single canvas roof of the tent; and what with the high temperature and the heat of the wine within the guests, a rollicking gayety by this time pervaded the whole party. Liqueurs were now served, but as there were no small glasses, curçao and kümmel were handed round in tumblers. Snatches of wild Circassian and Slav song burst from the throats of many, and soon an incoherent babble reigned.

About this period of the feast the Tsarevitch thought it wise to retire. His departure brought

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sighs of relief from various parts of the marquee, and the babble grew louder and louder. At least three of the guests, who had been dozing in their chairs, now made themselves more comfortable by slipping under the table and falling fast asleep on the sward beneath.

I had not yet arrived at that somnolent stage, for, having taken care to drink sparingly, I was yet fairly coherent and consistent in my movements. This unsociable attitude on my part gave evident annoyance to the rest of the company. An old Circassian general had been looking at me with unmistakable disgust for some time, and eventually becoming quite angry at my provoking sobriety, he at last, with a few of his brother officers, conspired to bring about that state of inebriety which prevailed with the majority of the company. A Cossack orderly was called in, and a low whisper within the trooper's ear from the aged warrior sent him on his devilish errand.

Presently he returned with a basket. Shouts of approval burst from the little army of conspirators who had rallied round the aged officer. With many chuckles and uncertain hand the sly old general slowly produced from the basket a half-dozen quarts of Guinness's Dublin Stout!

When the six black bottles stood on the table each conspirator seized one and, flourishing it aloft, shouted, "Here's British drink for the Englishman!"

I almost turned faint at the prospect of adding

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this "British drink," as they called it, to the many nationalities of drink already within me. I looked at the grinning faces of the officers in despair. There was no help for it. The aged chief and his friends were slowly lifting the bumpers of the frothy, gelatinous, tepid fluid—for it had been lying many hours exposed to the sun—to their lips. The officers who had already succumbed to overindulgence in previous potations were roughly roused from their grassy beds to join the toast to the English guest. It is the custom of the Muscovite never to take the goblet from his lips till the very dregs are reached. This custom I knew only too well. Standing up with a ghastly smile, I seized the proffered goblet and lowered its contents till naught but the foam remained.

An escort of four sturdy Cossacks saw me and the aged general safely to our respective billets, keeping us steady on our horses by prodding us with the butt end of their lances. The sun was setting as I fell into a deep and unbroken slumber on the soft cushions of the ottoman, but it was the darkest hour before dawn when I suddenly awoke from my slumbers with a strong conviction gradually creeping over me of some catastrophe.

An angry voice was loudly anathematizing me. Forbes, who had just ridden in from the Danube, where he had sent off a budget of war news, had stumbled over my body in the center of the room, had struck a light to see what had happened, and

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was vigorously shaking me into a sitting posture, inquiring why I had slept in my spurs and for what reason I preferred the hard floor to the soft pillows of the ottoman.

A skirmish shortly after this banquet resulted in an adventure in which I was the principal actor, and which, even if I had been still under the influence of the previous day's festivity, would have sobered me. In the afternoon we had a slight reconnaissance across the river Lom to find out how strong the enemy might be at that point, where we were about to cross in force. We kept a battery of field guns, supported by infantry, masked in an emplacement on a natural glacis of plowed fields trending toward the river, while some of our cavalry swam the stream with their horses, under cover of the infantry and artillery.

I had advanced with the Russian skirmishing line toward the river when the Russian general, observing a strong body of the enemy's cavalry about to work round the flank of our troopers who had just landed, thought he would give our men breathing time to get into fighting trim by attracting the enemy's attention with a few shells from our emplaced guns. The Turks were already engaged with our infantry in a sharp fusillade across the river, at which my pony was already showing considerable resentment. I was about to dismount and seek cover, for the little beast was dancing and bucking vigorously, when suddenly our shells began to whistle overhead,

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and this new noise was quickly followed by their explosion on the opposite bank of the river and the sharp blast of the cannon behind us.

My horse stiffened himself and stood still, evidently thinking out the novel situation. Then suddenly, without the slightest warning, he turned sharply round, took the bit between his teeth, and bolted. I was so taken by surprise that before I could recover myself I found we were halfway up the glacis, and swift as the wind I was carried right into the teeth of the Russian guns. Crash! Crash! Whiz! Whiz! came shell after shell.

As I neared the top of the glacis I could feel the whirlwind of the projectiles as they clove the air, and the lurid blaze of the guns almost blinded me. I lay as flat as I could along my pony's neck till the black mud curtains of the emplacement suddenly barred my path, when I rose in my saddle, and in another moment we cleared the parapet and plumped right into the center of the battery, scattering the gunners.

A moment later, flushed and breathless, I found myself standing by the side of my trembling little horse, trying to explain, in snatches of Russian, French, German, and English, to the general and his staff, who had ridden up to the emplacement, the reason for my charging the Russian guns.

Barely two days after these little incidents Forbes and I were on our way to join Baron Krudener's army marching on Plevna, where the Turks under

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Osman Pasha had lately made so bold a stand that the Russian force had been obliged to retire with considerable loss after a futile attempt to enter the town. It was necessary to leave our cart and stores with our servants behind us, for we could not be hampered with impedimenta of that kind if we desired to be in time for Krudener's onslaught. We were, therefore, often on short commons, for the villages en route had been stripped of everything edible by the advancing army, and we could find only an occasional cake of maize bread and a few eggs to keep us from famishing.

We arrived, sick with hunger, about sunset at the Bulgarian village of Karagac-Burgaski, where Schakofsky, commanding the left wing of the Russian division, was quartered.

After shaking the dust from our clothes and making a rough toilet, we presented ourselves at the door of the general's hut and were soon ushered into the compound at the back, where Schakofsky was seated on a camp stool, talking to two young aids who were standing at the salute in front of him. On seeing us he motioned us to approach, and Forbes at once presented a letter of introduction which the chief of the Emperor's staff had given him. The general took the envelope and looked at us both with an air of sullen tolerance as he broke the seal and read the contents. A grim smile came over his face as he slowly turned the note over with his finger and thumb and carefully examined the seal.

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"Well, gentlemen," said he, "it is lucky for you to have brought this note, for I have no alternative but to allow you to remain; otherwise I should have requested you to quit the camp at once."

While he was making this curt and inhospitable speech a Cossack servant was busily engaged in laying a white cloth on a rough table composed of the panels of a door which rested on two empty wine kegs. These proceedings riveted our attention, but as we wistfully glanced with devouring eyes at the articles of food placed on the table, the general dispelled any hope we might have had of the prospect of breaking our fast at his board, by quietly saying:

"Gentlemen, I am about to dine. Good evening."

We saluted, and sorrowfully went on our way. For an hour we hunted the village for food to appease the ravenous craving within us; but finding none, we at last threw our weary limbs on the straw floor of an unoccupied tent, and, to relieve the pinch of hunger hitched in our belts and smoked till we eventually fell asleep. I dreamed of the Briela banquet, of luscious viands, and of all the delicacies of the season, till I awoke at dawn with a hunger which was simply appalling. Turning over on my side, I discovered, within an inch of my nose, a wooden bowl brimful of eggs. I sat up, rubbed my eyes, and shook myself to see if I was really awake. I looked at the precious sight once more, fearing that it might still be only one of the many fantasies of my night's dreans. I stretched forth my hand,

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clutched the bowl, and, finding it real, gave a cry of satisfaction. They were eggs—eight of them, and warm from the pot!

A loud laugh rang through the tent, and a voice cried: "Now, Villiers, don't be greedy. Leave some for me."

It was Forbes. I discovered that my dear, good friend, in renewing his search for food at dawn, had found the eggs and had refrained from breaking his fast until he had seen the full effect that the sight of so large and satisfactory a meal would have on his half-starved companion.

After this frugal breakfast we started with the army on its final march toward Plevna, tramping along bad roads and through deeply furrowed fields till late in the afternoon, when we came to a halt at our camping ground. The staff tents were pitched in a stubbled maize field and one of the officers, who was attached to the division as aide-de-camp of the Tsar, came up to us. We must have still looked hungry, for he said:

"You have not had much meat to-day, I know; therefore, if this poor fare is of any service to you, take it with pleasure." He then produced from his trousers pocket a lump of dried meat and a large onion. "Later on, when the cooks set to work, come into my tent and have some bouillon."

We heartily thanked him, and we also found his word good for the soup.

During the evening it began to rain, making the

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field in which we were camped a perfect quagmire. About midnight a Jew sutler arrived, and we bought from him some raw sausage and a pint of spirit. With these rations we felt well supplied for any emergency till Plevna was captured.

When the reveille sounded, as it had ceased raining, I lifted the fly of my tent to look at the morning, and saw a quaint figure standing out against the sky. It was a tall, eccentric-looking man, in pink silk pajamas, with a monocle in his left eye, who was slowly stirring a steaming glass of tea with a silver spoon. He was gingerly standing with bare feet on a small mat of wet straw which his servant had collected from the stubble around to prevent his master from soiling his feet with the thick, clayey mud which oozed about him. He continued stirring his tea until his monocled eye glanced on me, when he good-naturedly handed me the cup.

"Take it! Take it!" he drawled. "There's plenty more, my friend," and his servant, who was tending a steaming samovar a few yards away, at once brought another glass.

"Well," said my newly made acquaintance, stretching himself and yawning, and turning his glass eye on the quagmire around him, "this *is* beastly. Why did I ever leave Paris to come to this infernal hole?"

As I gazed at him in some surprise he lit a cigarette and continued:

"You see, my dear sir, though I am a Russian, I

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am almost a Frenchman. Lived in Paris nearly all my life, and this sort of thing"—looking over the cheerless fields and waving his hand—"is beastly, *absolument!*"

As I made no comment, he drawled on, "Then why did I leave France? you would say. Well, you see, patriotism was the prime incentive. I left the army when I was only *sous-lieutenant*, and, having resided in Paris ever since, I felt bound to do something for my country when in distress, and here I am attached as an extra nothing-in-particular to Schakofsky's staff, and find that all the friends of my early military career are either dead or full-blown generals, and the latter, when they see me, no doubt think I am very much in the way. For I have no special duty, and, in fact, why am I here? God only knows!"

He then dropped his eyeglass, gave a deep sigh, and swallowed his tea. The Parisian-Russian and I became great friends and we saw a good deal of each other during this memorable day.

The morning had broken chilly. Mist still clung to the sodden ground. So dense was it that on my joining Schakofsky's staff one of his aides-de-camp turned to me and said: "This is excellent! For foggy weather is a good omen for Russians."

I remembered a certain gray morning at Inkerman that I had read about, and should have liked to know whether the Russians were of the same opinion then. But I said nothing.

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We had not approached far on the march before a low "Boom!" trembled through the fog.

"'Ha, *mon cher* Villiers!" said my friend with the monocle, who had at that moment trotted up to me. "Listen! Now ze ball is about to open. Listen!"

I looked at him with rather a grim smile. The pane still coldly glittered in his left eye. I thought of his silk pajamas, his silver tea set, and the many Parisian fal-lals which found a place in his tent, and came to the conclusion that my soldier of the boulevards had evidently not yet seen how the shells could waltz around.

Boom! Boom! went the guns through the fog, like muffled drums. The general, passing down the lines, shouted, "Good morning, my children." "Good morning, little father," came the cry from the men. The troops now commenced deploying in columns of double companies—with a rifle company in front of each battalion—behind a ridge known as the Radeshova Heights, from the little village of that name which nestled at its base.

The fog, which had retarded a general movement, was now lifting, and the gray battalions of Schakofsky's command began to strip themselves of their overcoats and to prepare for the fray.

At last, from flank to flank, the order to advance rang out and the men slowly moved over the crest. Then I knew for the first time that our artillery was on that ridge, for several guns suddenly opened fire

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to cover the infantry as they threaded their way through the scrub on the face of the descent beyond. The Turks in the Plevna batteries, observing this movement, began dropping shells up on the slope and ridge.

As the general, following the infantry with his staff, rode through Radeshova village, a shell skimmed the crest and burst a few yards from us. So near was it, and no casualty taking place, I thought I would pick up a segment as a souvenir, and dismounted to do so. When I took the piece in my hand the metal was so hot that I was compelled to drop it in a puddle to cool.

On seeing me do this, Schakofsky and one or two of his staff laughed, the general muttering something about the "eccentricities of the English."

As we rode on to the ridge the last shroud of mist lying over the landscape seemed suddenly to melt away. The sky was bright and clear, and the sun's rays soon dried our damp clothes and drove the chill from our bodies. The panorama before us was a succession of short valleys, red with an early harvest of Indian corn. Wet with the recent rain, the maize sheafs gleamed like stacks of gold against the purple of the hills.

Behind the scant cover of the corn stacks were hidden dismounted Cossacks and their horses. In our immediate front was our artillery, then came the reverse slope of the ridge—on which our infantry were lying *perdu*—shelving down into the valley

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of the Vid. But before I could take in further details of our position, whiz! whiz! came two shells, bursting in front and rear of us. At least five had torn large furrows in the soil before the general gave the order to dismount and seek cover. The staff led their horses to a thicket on the reverse slope. I was to take my horse there, too, and I dismounted with considerable alacrity, for the situation was becoming serious; but when I attempted to lead my pony to the thicket he stood stock-still. With staring eyes and ears cocked, he appeared to be listening to the music of the shells as they whistled round about us.

They seemed to explode and blaze wherever I turned. The air was rent with the sharp blast of their report. We were the only living objects on the ridge, and the Turks were making better practice every minute, but still my pony would not budge an inch. I looked round in despair; I could see the members of Schakofsky's staff grimly smiling—from their cover—at my dilemma. My friend Forbes, who had also succeeded in gaining the thicket, shouted, "Leave your horse and come away!"

I could never make out why I did not follow his advice; probably I thought how valuable the animal might be in a retreat if he showed so much reluctance in advancing. Anyway, I stuck to the little brute, and to soothe his nerves I kept patting his neck, till at last I succeeded in turning his tail toward the Turkish gunners; then softly rubbing his nose, I

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attempted to lead him, and to my joyful surprise he slowly followed me to a corn stack, behind which were two Cossacks who had been anxiously watching my little adventure and who now rushed from their cover and embraced me in true Russian fashion —with a kiss on each cheek—so delighted they seemed to be at my miraculous escape.

By this time the guns on both sides had begun gradually to slacken their thunder, and soon an ominous silence reigned. Wondering at the quietude, I left my horse in the hands of one of the friendly Cossacks, crept back over the ridge, and rejoined my friend Forbes.

This is what I saw from the thicket—I jotted down the details at the time on the side of one of my sketch-books. Before us opened the wide valley of the Vid; the stream from which it is named—a narrow band of blue—occasionally flashed in the sunlight from out some gentle undulations as it lazily wormed its way through the valley. On our right hand was the Gravitza ridge, on the highest point of which stood a large redoubt. Below this ridge and crossing the valley were a series of strong earthworks and redoubts crowning the waves of undulating country rolling toward the town of Plevna, which was soon to become famous as the scene of one of the world's great battles. The red tiles of the houses and the metal-topped minarets of its white mosques were easily discernible nestling behind the formidable works of the Moslems, which bristled from every

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mound and every point of vantage given by the slightest irregularity of the ground.

Even Krudener's batteries, semicircling the great Gravitza, hushed their distant growling. Both Turks and Russians paused in their bloody duel and seemed breathlessly awaiting some unusual event.

From the direction of Plevna, passing close under the Turkish advance works on our extreme left, a troop of scattered horsemen tore at hard gallop toward us, over the Loftscha road, concentrating as they neared, and drawing sharp volleys from the Turkish skirmishers. Cheers went out from our men lying under the scrub to the wild-looking band of Russian Circassians as they ran the gantlet of the Turkish fire. In another moment the dare-devil troopers swept like a slant of wind up our slope and, gaining the ridge, passed Schakofsky, who was now returning the salute of their commander.

As their leader returned his saber and galloped past, I saw that it was young General Skobeleff. He had just returned from a reckless reconnaissance right into the very town itself. Shot at from the roofs and windows of every house in the main street of Plevna, into which he boldly penetrated, he had come safely back with most valuable information gained at the cost of only a few slight casualties.

The cannon on both sides still held their breath. When would this extraordinary silence be broken?

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However, we were not kept waiting long. From among the little group of officers by whom the general was surrounded several saluted him and quickly galloped away. One dashed down the slope and wound his way through the infantry as they lazily stretched themselves in the sun. Soon the whole hillside became alive with bristling bayonets as the men sprang up at the word "Forward!"

In another moment the Russian infantry trudged down the slope and over the stubble fields, spreading out as they advanced till their lines stretched right across the valley of the Vid. When halfway between our ridge and the first line of Turkish trenches, a little puff of smoke floated upward from the field, followed by a sharp crack of a rifle. Thus began one of the most memorable battles of the century.

Now in quick succession puffs of smoke shot up, followed by the sharp crackle of musketry as the Russian troops steadily advanced. Then from both the left flanks and the right our artillery thundered once more, and shrapnel hailed its deadly splinters upon the Turkish trenches. But as yet there was no response from the grim and silent lines of earthworks which the Russians were, with unwavering lines, approaching.

Suddenly short puffs of smoke leaped up from the fringe of the Turkish works, which quickly rilled their trenches in one long flame. Our artillery increased its thunder, and with deadly precision hurled shell after shell into the enemy's position. But

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still the long, yellow flame played unbroken, like sunshine on the ocean's ripple, along the parapet of the works.

Soon the valley became hazy with smoke as the Russian infantry passed within the zone of the Turkish fire. Only the bright flashes from the thousands of moving rifles told us how the advance was going on.

Presently from out the stifling fog came limping men with torn and bloody clothes, many without their caps, and not a few without their rifles. Some dropped, fainting by the way, others unsteadily struggled back to the Radeshova slope. Here and there were little groups of men carrying maimed comrades. Up over our ridge came struggling one of these groups; two soldiers, slightly hurt, were carrying a less fortunate comrade, who groaned from out the folds of a blanket fixed stretcherwise across their rifles.

A dark liquid slowly dripped from the saturated blanket and marked a bloody trail down to the village behind the ridge, where the doctors had placed the first-aid station. The dark red track grew wider every moment, for the trail was so closely followed by other bearers that the path could easily be traced right across the valley.

Wave after wave of Russians steadily fed the straggling front, and, broken by the terrible hail from the trenches, sowed the field with little heaps of dead and dying. As the black-and-white dots—

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for the men were wearing their dark-green tunics and white trousers—crept nearer and nearer the trenches they seemed to split up into small groups, and soon in their front sharp flashes of light gleamed for a moment as their officers waved their swords and shouted to the men to close.

For a time they hovered hesitatingly, like hornets uncertain where to thrust their sting. Presently a small number of the more reckless rushed the first work, then a sound, half yell, half cheer, was wafted across the valley as the rest of the advance dashed on. The foremost immediately fell, but in spite of the deadly fire belching from the parapet, the remainder pushed forward.

On these few men the whole field seemed to rally, and a rush was made to swell the bristling torrent which now surged up over the redoubt. We could see the sun glinting for a moment on the bayonets of the men as they were brought to the charge. Then the carnage of close quarters began to dull the steel, and a confused babel of yells and curses came up from the valley.

The staff at this time was standing near Forbes, who was seated on a stone, busily scribbling his notes of the fight in a pocket book. "Villiers," said he, "we shall dine in Plevna to-night."

"Yes," certainly," said my Parisian-Russian friend, who was standing near, supplementing his monocle with a binocular. "We shall sup in Plevna to-night. Look at that, *mon cher* Villiers! See how

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brave our fellows use ze steel. We are very good, we Russians, at ze bayonet. Here, take my binocular—you will see better."

It was a glass with convertible lenses marked, "marine," "field," and "opera." I happened to have turned it to the last. My friend pointed out my mistake, and with a deep sigh, said, "Ah! That reminds me of the last time I looked through it at ze Grand Opéra de Paris."

Pong! Burr-r-r-r! And a shell split into segments a few yards from us. My friend yawned and continued, "Surely you remember ze *saison* of 1876, and ze *belle première danseuse*, eh?"

Cr-r-ash! came another shell. Still with perfect calmness he went on, "I mean ze petite brunette wiz ze *nez retroussé*."

Well!

A few yards in our rear a shower of mud was dashed up as a shell plowed the field. A clod of earth caught my friend in the small of his back, bringing him to his knees.

As he regained his feet he quietly readjusted his monocle and, shaking the muddy soil from his clothes, he alternately rubbed the place where he had been hit and angrily shook his fist toward the Turkish guns. When his ire allowed him to express his disgust by word of mouth, he cried: "*Mon cher* Villiers, these Turkish *canaille* are zo barbarious; they have not ze sympathy. Such is war—so vulgare!"

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The general was near us, scanning the field through his glass, and a smile of satisfaction was spreading over his face, for a battery of our guns had followed the infantry into the redoubt and was now playing havoc with the Turks, who were retiring toward the town.

The storm swept on for a moment, the thunder of the guns became a distant rumble, and a strange, weird silence lingered for a space over the field of battle. The Russian stretcher bearers had brought off the field all the maimed who were living. The thousands of little black-and-white dots studding the furrows and ruts of the heavy soil, who but a few moments ago were so busy in their life and vigor, were now mere clods, waiting to be returned to Mother Earth.

A suddening slackening of the flight in Krudener's direction made me wonder if we should really dine in Plevna that night. His guns slowly boomed in a half-hearted way and the rattle of his infantry was like the pulse of a dying man, fitful and weak. But still Schakofsky seemed sanguine and many thought that the square meal in Plevna that night was assured. For the first time in the day Forbes and I broke our fast and lit our pipes.

Presently, from out the captured redoubt an orderly rode in hot haste in our direction and hurried up to the general. Schakofsky appeared much disturbed at the news he brought, for he frowned and spoke rapidly to the members of the staff. The

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orderly remounted and returned, but had hardly gained the newly taken trenches when another horseman appeared, galloping madly toward us.

The face of this man was pale; his forehead, scarred by a passing bullet, was covered with bloody beads of perspiration which trickled down his cheek. As he dismounted, a more ominous-looking messenger could not be imagined. He was almost breathless, and quivering with excitment.

The general impatiently listened to his story. Then stamping his foot and clenching his hands in a delirium of passion, Schakofsky addressed his officers.

I touched my friend Forbes, who was still at work on his dispatches, and said: "Look at the general. Surely there's something up—some serious news."

"Oh, nonsense!" he replied. "It's all right."

I still persisted. "What does *this* mean?" I cried. From the lately captured redoubt the Russian batteries were returning on the gallop. The horses, clearing the curtains of the earthworks at a bound, dashed down into the trenches, then struggled up again, but still with the guns intact, while the drivers lashed furiously at their steaming flanks as they careered madly across the valley. "Hang it, Forbes! Look at that!"

My comrade sprang to his feet, and, seizing me by the arm, he said: "By Jove! Villiers, you're right! There is something up! The whole game 's up!"

For a time the capture of Plevna had seemed an

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accomplished fact, but such is the fortune of war that within a few minutes the tide had turned and the coveted goal was snatched from our grasp. The town which, peeping above the Turkish trenches, mocked us with its mosque and minarets, was not to fall into the hands of the Russians before one hundred and forty days had been spent in terrible fighting, and not until its fair fields had been drenched with the lifeblood of the flower of the Russian army, some seventy thousand men. The present Russian success had depended entirely upon holding that captured redoubt. Its loss was the last throw of the dice.

"Krudener's held in check," said Forbes, "and our reserves are used up. They have all gone forward." Even as he was speaking the Russian infantry came clambering over the works in the wake of the guns and raced across the battle ground. It seemed but a moment later that the Turkish shells shrieked through the air and burst among the retreating masses. Up and over the ridge of Radeshova came the Russian infantry in panic-stricken flight—a mere rabble, all making for the road along which we had advanced but a few hours previously in such good spirits and so confident of success. Even now the Turks, strongly reinforced, were occupying all their old positions, and blazing away at us with renewed vigor.

Krudener, on our right, had been unable to make any headway at all, finding the Turks in the Gravitza

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position too strong for him, and now the disaster befalling his left wing made his defeat complete, and this in turn imperilled the entire Russian position and made a general retreat imperative to avoid capture or annihilation.

The wounded had been collecting all day long in the little village we had passed through in the early morning. I therefore said to Forbes, "I will go and see what I can do for the wounded, as I am of no use here."

Leaving my comrade with the general and his staff, I started on my errand. As I rode down to Radeshova several hundred panic-stricken soldiers came tearing over the ridge like a tidal wave, carrying everything before them. Many, to impede their movements the less, had rid themselves of their overcoats and accouterments. Some had thrown away their rifles, and not a few stripped themselves to their shirts.

A number of bandsmen were among this crowd, and several had cast aside their more cumbersome instruments. A kettledrum was sticking in the mud. The brass rim lying uppermost reflected the flare of a bursting shell. The lurid flash, catching my horse's eye, caused the brute to begin prancing about, evidently more scared at this to him singular object than the hurry-scurry and din of battle around him.

This incident was fatal to my plans of succoring the Radeshova wounded, for in the twinkling of an eye my pony was nearly swept off his feet and he

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and I were caught in the current of the retreat before we had gained the outskirts of the village and tossed about as in a stormy sea. With the greatest difficulty I strove to keep the little beast under me from being impaled on the bayonets of the reckless soldiery as they stumbled over the deeply rutted fields in the gloom of the coming night.

In spite of the darkness rapidly closing in upon us, the flicker of Turkish fire did not diminish, but came nearer and nearer as the hordes of Moslem irregulars hurried on the heels of the retreat, slaying all the weak or wounded that came within their clutches. As they carried on their ghastly work, their exultant yells and the heartrending shrieks of their tortured victims came up from the valley.

At last I was swept with the torrent of helpless fugitives toward a thicket flanking the road to Karagac-Burgaski. Hurrying through the wood was an officer; following him were about forty men, all bloody and ragged. They were still under discipline and moving in fairly good order. The officer, on sighting me, ordered his men to halt, and out of sheer weariness the majority threw themselves on the ground. He then asked me the direction of the Burgaski road, and in an agitated voice, broken with pity and anger, said: "Look, monsieur, look! Here are all the men that remain out of one of the Tsar's finest regiments, and I am their only officer."

I pointed to the blazing of bursting shrapnel a few hundred yards on our left flank. "The Turks

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are showing us the road. There it lies, evidently," said I.

Our line of retreat was for many miles plowed by the enemy's shells. I eventually came upon the main road and found it crowded with panic-stricken soldiers. An ambulance wagon and five country carts were slowly lumbering along, brimming over with wounded, and on either side of the wagons were crowds of maimed men who had hopelessly struggled to get places within and were now clinging to the wheels and tailboards of the heavily laden vehicles. Many were struck down by their more fortunate companions within the carts when too great a number clung to the wheels and impeded their progress.

I found only fourteen able-bodied men with this contingent, and they were trying to save the groaning and whimpering occupants of the wagons by skirmishing within a decent radius to scare off the overbold Bashi-Bazouks who were following us, slaying all the wounded that came in their way. Toward midnight the Turkish fire ceased, and these jackels of the Turkish army, glutted with the blood of their helpless victims, at last slunk back to their lines, and we moved along in peace till early dawn, when we discovered between us and the village of Bulgarini what appeared to be a party of Circassians.

We sent out a few of our party to reconnoiter and prepared to die protecting our charge, when to our joy the scouts came galloping back, bringing in one of the party, who turned out to be of our own cavalry.

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Their uniforms were exactly like Turkish Circassians', but for a white cross worn on their astrakhan shakos, which in the mist of the early morning we had been unable to distinguish. On arriving at the village we requisitioned all the straw from the barns and thatch of the houses, and placed our wounded on the litter, standing guard round them till the sun was up, when we found the safety of our position for a time assured. I had foraged around for food and was able to procure a large cake of maize bread, some of which I ate and the remainder I stuck on the pommel of my saddle.

Seeing Schakofsky and a few of his staff riding toward the village, I rode up to my friend of the previous morning, who had remarked so flippantly that "ze ball was about to open." As I neared the party they all seemed terribly dejected, and I thought how much the group resembled Meissonier's picture of Napoleon's retreat from Moscow. I offered my friend with the eyeglass (which, by the bye, was still fixed in its accustomed place) the cake of maize. He sadly shook his head and said, "I have no appetite." I then proffered it to the other members of the staff. They all answered, "We cannot eat."

I inquired if they had seen Forbes.

"Not since the previous night," they replied.

I became terribly anxious about him, for to all my inquiries the same ominous answer came, "Not since last night." With a heavy heart I turned my

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little horse's head toward the Danube, for I must now hurry off my budget of war sketches.

Toward midday I came up with the head of the retreating army. Crashing and jamming over the little bridge spanning the river Osma, crowding the valley beyond, and further filtering through the passes cutting the belt of hills running parallel to the Danube, was the remnant of that force of thirty thousand men that but a brief four-and-twenty hours previously had advanced with such high hope and had fought so heroically for their country's honor. My heart went out to them in sympathy for their misfortune, for Russian soldiers are stolid, brave fellows, and I had witnessed their heroism, their endurance, and their humiliation.

In a state of utter confusion were ambulances, baggage wagons, artillery, and men of all arms. A surgeon who knew me struggled out of the crush and, riding up to me, said: "Did you ever see anything like this? Osman Pasha is one big fool. Why does he not come on? He would cut us up in one hour."

The famous though rather indolent pasha was sitting, no doubt, smoking his pipe, satisfied with his victory, and he did not come down upon us, to the astonishment of many besides my surgeon friend, for indeed Osman had a splendid opportunity at this moment to drive us all into the Danube.

The Russian forces eventually rallied and intrenched themsleves. I kept on to Sistova, arriving

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there late at night. I gave my poor, fagged-out horse three rations of grain and soon fell asleep on the flags of the courtyard of the inn—for I could get no shelter—to the sound of my horse crunching his corn, as he stood near me with his bridle rein secured to my wrist. Once or twice I was awakened by a gentle tug at my arm, and the sound of the corn-munching still went on. Poor brute! He would not risk lying down, for he seemed to know there was further hard work for him in the morning. At dawn I gave him a drink of water down by the river and we crossed the bridge to Simnitza, thence on to Giurgevo, to catch the evening train for Bucharest.

There was nothing to disturb our equanimity on the way till we came within a mile of Giurgevo, where the road skirts the bank of the river. On my left, inland, was a wide and deep ditch, one side of the trench being in the deep shadow cast by the setting sun. The dark gap appeared weird and uncanny to my horse and the animal became excessively restive, snorting and shying at the faint shadows.

Now it was the custom of the Turks in Rústchuk, on the opposite shore, about this time in the afternoon, to open fire on the Bucharest train being made up in the Giurgevo station. Out of pure deviltry the Moslems brought one of their guns to bear on the solitary rider struggling with his horse along the riverside, apparently trying to catch the train—my polite Turkish friends evidently not recognizing at that moment and at that distance the distinguished

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visitor they had treated with so much courtesy a few months back, when my Levantine dragoman took me up to see their fort. However, their shots were badly aimed; though they burst on the road and in the ditch, they only cured my horse of shying. Seeing at once the old accustomed situation, the animal bolted the rest of the way, bringing me on time to the station, where I left the poor brute in comparative comfort in the charge of a Cossack.

At about nine o'clock I arrived in Bucharest, the "little Paris of the East." Unwashed for three days, plastered with incrusted dust, the uppers of my boots almost worn through my riding breeches, stiff in every bone from exposure and continued riding in the same saddle, I staggered out of my *calèche* into the pretty little garden of Brofft's hotel.

As I dragged myself wearily over the gravel, to my delight and great surprise I discovered my lost friend Forbes; by his side were W. Beatty Kingston of the *Daily Telegraph*, and the English consul, sitting, dining at a table under the trees. As I approached the little party, Forbes turned round and uttered a short exclamation of surprise, and then, with the others, stared at me with a peculiar look I shall never forget. I was suddenly arrested by this curious expression on their faces, and stood transfixed.

Forbes, still with his eyes dilated and fixed upon me, rose from the table and walked slowly toward me. When he came within a yard he suddenly gave a shout of satisfaction and grasped me by the

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shoulder, shaking me all the while. Then the other men came forward and clutched me. Not quite understanding this novel proceeding, I quietly said, "For goodness' sake, give me something to eat and drink; I am starving."

Forbes shook me all the more at this remark, saying, "That's Villiers for certain, and alive, too! You ungrateful youngster! Here have we been mourning you as killed at Plevna, and now to our joy at finding that you are not an apparition the only return you make is immediately to question our hospitality by asking for something to eat and drink. Pass the wine. By Jove! he does look faint!"

I certainly felt in that condition. I was so dead-beat that when I got to my room that night I fell on the bed without undressing. Toward noon next day I found myself awake, between the sheets. How I was undressed and tucked up on that occasion remains a mystery to me. I was totally oblivious to any kind offices till the waiter came in with my coffee.

Forbes, I found, had on that unfortunate night at Plevna given me up for lost, as all the wounded in Radeshova had been massacred by Bashi-Bazouks a short time after I had left him for the purpose of looking after the ambulance. I always ascribe my safety on that occasion to the regimental drum sticking in the mud.

There were also several officers in the Russian army who could sketch and paint well, especially

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one excellent artist with the advance cavalry, General Arnoldi. As soon as his scouts and dragoons had cleared a section of the country of the enemy, he would send for me and we would take our camp stools and water colors and settle down before some picturesque cottage, surrounded by its scared inhabitants, and add color to the pages of our sketch books. Sometimes we would be far in advance of the main body and the commissariat. I remember one morning we were fearfully hungry, with the possibility of waiting for many hours till the ration wagons came up. The general ordered one of his troopers to empty his pockets. In one of them was a handful of odd pieces of black bread.

"Ah!" said the general, "these are what I want." and he grabbed the evil-looking pieces. "You may go now," and the soldier trotted off evidently much elated with the honor the general had paid him.

"Take a share," said the soldier-artist as he handed the lot to me.

"Thanks," said I; "but won't that poor devil go wanting?"

"Why," replied Arnoldi, "this is a red-letter day for him. He will tell his comrades with great glee that the general eats of the same fare as themselves."

I tried to bear in mind the old adage of not looking "a gift horse in the mouth" by averting my gaze from the unpalatable-looking rations, and then without further delay swallowed them.

Another clever artist with whom I became friendly

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during that campaign was Prince Alexis Dolgorouki. I came across him in a rather odd way. Forbes and I were in search of the army that was to be first to cross the Danube, and we were on the lookout for General Dragamiroff who was in command. By night-time we found that we were with the division belonging to Prince Mirski, who befriended us and told us that he would let us know when the passage of the historic river would take place. I take my friend Forbes's account of what followed:

"Presently Prince Mirski sent a servant across to our garden to say that his little personal train was ready, and we fell in behind the wagon which contained the camp kit of His Highness. A soldier rode up to our carriage and told us, in excellent English, that he was commanded by the general to serve as our escort. Russian private soldiers are not commonly conversant with English; yet this man, judging by his uniform, seemed nothing more than a simple soldier, an infantryman of the foot regiment of the 9th Division, mounted on a little white horse. He wore the white blouse of the private soldier with the shoulder straps of the regiment; a bayonet hung from his waist belt. His loose trousers were tucked into his long boots.

"Oh yes, he had been in England several times—merely pleasure visits. He knew a number of people there, but was not good at remembering names. Lord Carrington he had met several times. Here was a puzzling private soldier, truly! I left the

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carriage, mounted my horse, and joined him. We talked all the way to Piatra, and the more we talked the more I wondered to find, in a private soldier, a man who knew most of the capitals of Europe; who had seen, in Berlin, Count Seckendorff's water colors; who knew the details of the stampede of the troop horses of our household cavalry from their picket pegs among the sand of Cove Common; who criticized the cookery of the Café Anglais; and whose brother was aide-de-camp of the Emperor and the governor of a province.

"I am not good at asking people for their names, but as we rode down the hill into Piatra he casually mentioned that his name was Dolgorouki. I have had strange experiences in my time, but never before has it fallen to my lot to have a prince acting as the escort of my baggage wagon."

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Chapter VI

THE BLACK DEATH

Ten battles in two years and as many skirmishes—A record for a young man—Black Death stalks the Rumanian Plains—The Red Cross nurse and her wretched patients—A princely Samaritan—I stay with Skobeleff—What nations fight for—I ride his white charger and dye it magenta—MacGhan succumbs—I introduce two great opponents to each other.

IN a short two years I had already been an eye-witness, at the age of twenty-six, to ten big battles and as many skirmishes, but this second battle of Plevna, which I have just described, was the biggest up to date, and stirred the world more than any of the other encounters. The most dramatic incident of that campaign to my mind, however, was the march of the Turkish defenders of the Plevna position after their surrender, which came as the result of the siege of that city by the reinforced Russian army. I have never seen a sight quite so sad in all my nomad life as the tramp of those wretched prisoners through Rumania into captivity in Russia during this cruel winter of 1877–8.

The Danube that year, before freezing, was full of floating ice, and the rapid current of the river pre-

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vented the passage of boats with food supplies, and all pontoons had been broken up by the floes. The Russian armies were practically starving. Then came the fall of the fortress and thousands of prisoners—extra mouths to feed— added to the difficulties of the Russian commissariat. The only thing for the Muscovites to do was to get the captured Turks as quickly as possible toward their food bases. Therefore, these men, half-starved on meager rations during the long siege, were pushed forward toward their goal, with hardly a scrap of food in their bodies for days on end. Not one third of these poor creatures who for so many months had held the huge masses of Russian soldiers at bay ever returned to their native land.

My companion, a doctor, and I were stowed away one morning with our furs in our sleigh—a sort of hencoop minus the top bars—with our baggage in the straw to serve as a seat. The mercury had fallen to some fifteen degrees below zero the night before, and our road, therefore, was too slippery to be the most desirable surface for sleighing. The result was that our conveyance would occasionally, to our consternation, run away with the horses when we came to a slant to left or right of the road, causing us to be always on the lookout for a collision with one of the many unsavory heaps of carrion by the roadside, on which hungry dogs were feeding. Dead horses and dying oxen now strewed our route, signs that we must be in the wake of some munition train.

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WINTER SCENE IN THE FIRST BALKAN WAR

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Presently we came up with a long line of wagons and sleighs loaded with shot and shell.

The morning was bitterly cold. Before us lay a vast plain of snow, broken only by the bare telegraph poles, which for miles traced our road through many a drift. The dead stillness of the plain under its white mantle was occasionally disturbed by the dull beating of the wings of carrion crows as the foul birds hovered over their prey. Soon they increased in number, making the leaden sky almost black. Then, afar off, breaking the horizon, a long dark line came slowly moving in caterpillar fashion over the snow toward us. It was a column of men marching. No Russian or Rumanian troops constituted it, or ere this we should have heard some cheerful song borne across the plain. I aroused my friend who had settled down in his furs and had fallen fast asleep.

"Look, what do you make of those fellows," said I. "Surely they must be Turkish prisoners. See the plumes of their Dorobantz guard waving as they advance."

"Yes," cried Sandwith, now thoroughly aroused and peering through his binocular. "I can see along with the escort Turkish officers, some on ponies, others on foot."

Behind tramped the men who had so long kept the Muscovites at bay around Plevna. How spiritless and broken they now looked as they trudged wearily along the road to their captivity! Half-starved,

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almost dead with fatigue and the cruel cold, many with fever burning in their eyes, mere stalking bones and foul rags, came the brave troops who had made the fame of Osman Pasha. My companion, with the keen scent of the medical practitioner, sniffed the taint of smallpox and typhus lingering about them in the frosty air.

"For our lives, Villiers, we must get to windward of these poor fellows!" And we drove our sleigh to the left flank of the approaching column.

Many of these wretched creatures were even now falling out of the ranks and lying down to die. One had just thrown himself in the snow by the roadside—he could go no farther. A comrade, loath to leave him, followed and tried to persuade him to struggle once more to join the line. There was no answer; he had swooned or was dead. The ghastly line of living phantoms was trudging wearily forward. A soldier of the rear guard now came up. With the butt end of his musket he roughly pushed the living man back into the ranks; then with a brutal kick turned the head of the fallen Turk over in the snow. A wild, fixed stare met his gaze. The Turk was dead. The soldier shouldered his rifle and rejoined the guard.

Thousands and thousands of birds of prey whirled around, settling in front or in rear of this sad procession, like sharks round a doomed ship. A few yards farther on, lying half covered with snow, was the nude body of a dead Turk who had been stripped

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by his companions for the sake of the little warmth of the fetid rags he had worn on his gaunt limbs. A carrion crow had just settled on his clenched hand, and the dogs were hurrying up to their loathsome repast.

Another man lay with upturned face staring on the heavens through the slowly falling snow. He was not quite dead, although the flakes lodged on his fixed eyeballs. Dogs and swine from the village near by were quarreling for their share of the ghastly feast.

In this village, called Putineiu, we found a large wooden lazaret built by the Russians. A considerable number of the Red Cross attendants lived in the houses of the village. In one large building which had once been a schoolhouse resided a Russian nobleman who was the chief of the ambulance. Hearing of our arrival, he kindly invited us to stay a day or two. We gladly accepted the prince's hospitality, for we knew there was scant comfort at Turnu-Magurelle, the little Danube town for which we were making. The ice was still on the move on the river and no communication with the opposite shore of the Danube could be made till the floes had packed. Here, while we waited, there was certainly comfort, if not luxury.

We slept in one common room, in which a German stove burned night and day, and we fed on biscuit and canned goods, generally with Russian tea for a beverage. There was plenty of tobacco in the shape of cigarettes, probably the finest the world could

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produce. Princely hospitality must crop up somewhere, even in humble quarters, and it came out strong in those cigarettes.

Our Russian host would say, as he whiffed at his gold and amber mouthpiece: "Pah! One cannot eat sucking pig and caviare when these poor devils are starving," alluding to the Turkish prisoners arriving daily, "but you can smoke and not be ashamed, and this tobacco is priceless."

A curious character was our host—good-hearted, sympathetic, and full of sincere commiseration for the terrible suffering around. He would come in after his morning duties in billeting the prisoners and shout for Carlos to come and fumigate him. He would strip by the stove, and while his servant sprayed him with Violette de Parme he would sponge his beard in a kerosene tin which served as a basin, and comb his hair before a jeweled mirror which came from his gold-and-turquoise dressing case—a glittering souvenir of the favor of his august soverign, the Tsar. This he never traveled without, and it was a token of the luxurious side of his character which, he would always tell you, he strove hard to hide from the misery around him. Nevertheless, he was seen to be everywhere administering to the wants of the starving, frost-bitten sufferers, in his rich sables and carrying a gold-mounted stick.

The prisoners were passing through Putineiu in thousands daily, and during the night were billeted on the inhabitants—who were almost as poverty-

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stricken as their guests—choking up their little hovels and breeding vermin and pestilence wherever they went. Mothers must protect their young ones from contagion, so when night set in those Turks too weak to resist were thrown out into the cold, which meant certain death, for the thermometer registered far below zero. The result was that the little dead-house opposite our lodgment was always well tenanted the following morning with stark and frozen Turks.

The doctor and I visited this charnel house. In one of the rooms we found a few poor creatures who had sought shelter from the bitterness of the night. They had cleared a space in the center of the room by piling the dead around, and had gathered scraps of rags from the bodies and some straw for a fire and were seated shoulder to shoulder around this fetid fuel, trying to ignite it with flint and steel. At last it smoked and smoldered.

One wretched Turk whom we had reckoned as dead crawled toward the weird group and, feebly struggling for a place near the burning rags, was thrown back by his luckier comrades on to the pile of dead. We remonstrated against this rough treatment, but his companions in misery sullenly replied: "Why should we waste warmth on him? He will be dead in a few minutes."

My companion, who spoke Turkish fluently, insisted on the poor fellow being allowed to huddle in with the rest round the cheerless fire. The Turk

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we had befriended could not speak his thanks for the palsy which had just seized him. Big tears stood in his eyes and rolled down his frost-bitten cheeks as he crawled up to the doctor and out of gratitude kissed his boots.

Many of these shuddering wrecks of humanity had not eaten for days, save of the carrion by the roadside. We were lingering, loath to go, but knowing not what to do to alleviate their misery. We had money, gold in plenty; but of what use was gold when there was nothing to buy? A gleam of sunshine sometimes pierced the ghastly gloom of the place when the little Russian Red Cross sister presented herself, smiling, at the door, in white cap and black waterproof apron, with a flaming red cross on her breast. I had met her before and had many arguments with her. She hated the horrible, bloodthirsty Turks—and for that matter the English, too, for their sympathy with those barbarians, as she was pleased to call them—yet she tolerated me and we were the best of friends.

"Here you are again," she said. "Still interested in these miserable creatures. Ugh! I loathe them!" But at the same time she swiftly passed round the group huddled by the fire, and in another moment the majority were smoking cigarettes, and some were trying to kiss her feet in the fervor of their happiness.

I have seen that little lady, though always railing at the horrible Turk, go into the most foul fever dens to administer comfort to the miserable prison-

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ers. She was the life and soul of the lazaret at Putineiu, and many a Turk, with his eyes glazing in death, would turn to her sweet face and try to utter a blessing on her for her devotion to the sick and dying.

Every morning the pure white snow in and around the village was blotted with the stark corpses of prisoners who had dropped by the way. Then the local *arabas* went round and the dead were collected, thrown in, pell-mell, till the carts seemed crowded with bones and rags. The stiffened limbs, catching between the spokes of the wheels, snapped and creaked in concert with the crazy vehicle as the bodies were carried to the empty granaries near by, which were used as burial pits.

The last day I spent in Puteneiu was probably the coldest of that exceptionally cold winter. The telegraph wires running along the roadside were encased in more than an inch of ice. The hospital glittered a ruby tint with frosted ice and now in the last rays of the blood-red sun sinking below the horizon. At this moment I called at the hut of my friend the Red Cross sister to say good-by. She had just returned from some act of mercy at the lazaret. As we stood on the threshold I drew her attention to the lovely evening. A star and crescent moon were now the only signs in the clear sky. My companion turned, touched my arm, and pointed over the plain. Ah! There was the long, black line winding over the snow. More Turkish prisoners!

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When was all this misery to end? On they tramped, footsore and weary, with their cadaverous faces and ice-laden beards. Some trudged along on their heels, their toes having sloughed away in the biting frost; many were half naked, the rotted rags having dropped from their limbs so as to show great pale patches of frost-bitten flesh.

The sister and I walked together toward the wooden bridge spanning the narrow ice-bound river. Here the long, black line came to a halt, and a ration of bread was served out to each prisoner of war. Some dropped it, their hands too stiffened with frost to hold on, and then there was a free fight among their more ravenous and stronger brethren for the discarded morsel, till the guard with the butt-ends of their rifles restored order. Some strove to moisten their hard rations in the puddles thawed by the warmth of their bodies, while others knelt in the snow, turning their weary heads toward the East and fervently praying after their own fashion. How the heavens that night with the emblems of their faith glittering on the snow and on their misery seemed to mock those poor men!

I looked at the sister; she was trembling with emotion. Tears stood in her eyes.

"Ah!" she said, as she wished me good-by. "I begin to love these wretched Turks. This misery atones for their many sins. God help them, for how little we can do!"

I walked away and lit one of the prince's cigarettes.

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As the fragrant smoke curled into the frosty air I could not refrain from thinking that the little lady with the black apron and flaming red cross on her breast was one of God's helping hands, and a very sweet one, too.

I was very glad when the moving ice began to settle on the Danube and made it possible for me to cross the river and join Skobeleff's army marching to Constantinople. As we slowly advanced toward the Moslem city the climate became warmer. Toward Christmas the Russian army had moved up on the ridge of Tchekmedjie and was looking down on the old Moslem city, just snatched from its grasp by the British squadron which had passed through the Dardanelles into the Sea of Marmora and was ready at a moment's notice to open fire on the Russians if they moved another yard toward Constantinople. It was a curious sensation for me—the sight of the warships flying the ensign of Old England. Indeed, I hardly knew whether there was still within me the patriotic feeling that ought to arise at the sight of the flag "that braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze." For I had shared the vicissitudes of the Russian army during many a fight and a trying march across the Balkan Peninsula and I had found the Muscovites, whom the majority of us Englishmen regard as veritable Russian bears, to be good-natured, jolly, kind fellows.

During that long halt of the Russians outside

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Constantinople I took up my quarters in the English club in the Grand rue de Pera. Here that famous war correspondent, the veritable emancipator of Bulgaria, Januarius Aloysius MacGahan, whom I had previously met up country, used to join me at dinner. He was nursing the United States military attache, Lieut. F. V. Green, who was suffering from typhoid fever. MacGahan used to turn up rather late for dinner after his assiduous attention to his ailing countryman, and I noticed that his appetite was gradually becoming poorer and poorer, till at last he would eat nothing but a few strawberries, which he amused himself by requisitioning from my plate when the dessert came on. We had both been looking forward to meeting the great Russian general, Skobeleff, who had invited us to stay with him at his camp at Tchekmedjie.

On the morning we were to start, MacGahan sent me the message that he was not well enough to go with me then, but would I go and inform Skobeleff that he would be at his headquarters the following day.

Riding out from Constantinople, I found the Russian commander in his tent, which was pitched on a little hillock in the center of his army of thirty thousand warriors, "the survival of the fittest" of that famous Russian legion which had forced the passage of the Danube in the previous June.

The smart and acute Skobeleff had picked up a few ideas from the "unspeakable Turk." I found

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that the majority of his men had discarded the Krenke and Berdan rifles for a lighter and surer weapon, the Martini-Peabody of the Turkish Redfis.

Skobeleff met me in his temporary dining room, an arbor of greenery a few paces in front of his little tent. A curious figure the general looked as the leaves fluttered about his clean-shaven head, for he had copied the Mussulman in this respect also, and his cranium was as smooth as a billiard ball. His big yellow beard seemed to cover the upper part of his tightly buttoned gray overcoat. His high Russian boots were splashed with mud, for he had just ridden up from San Stefano, the seaside quarters of the Grand Duke Nicholas, the Russian Commander-in-Chief.

After a hearty welcome he inquired, "Where is MacGahan?"

I gave him his message, and added that my comrade was rather unwell. A shadow passed over Skobeleff's face as he received this information, and he said, with great concern: "My dear Villiers, I know MacGahan thoroughly, and I fear that he must be seriously ill not to keep an appointment with me. Ah! what a fine fellow our American friend is. By Jove! don't I remember what a sensation he caused when he arrived in Khiva from that long, lonely ride across the Turkoman desert! I took to his genial, brave face at once, and we have been the best of friends ever since. Well, our party will indeed be a small one. There are only myself

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and a Frenchman, but we will, nevertheless, do our best to entertain you."

The general himself was good enough for me, for I was full of that hero worship which is one of the grandest sensations of youth. And Skobeleff, next to Clive, was my paragon in the way of war and adventure.

His tent was furnished with the utmost plainness. A truckle bed, a table, and a chair made up the complement of his household effects. Three books—those he most prized—were on a little table, a small piece of candle stuck in a tin candle-holder beside them. I looked with interest at the contents of his scanty library. It consisted of *The American War*, by Badeau; Schuyler's *Campaigning on the Oxus;* and the *Life and Adventures of Napoleon.*

The evening train did not bring MacGahan, and so it was rather a sad party at dinner in the little green arbor that night.

Just as the meal was announced, Skobeleff said to me, "Here's a little function you might find interesting." And so, taking me with him, he reviewed a body of some twenty company cooks, who were drawn up in line a few paces outside his tent. Each man held in front of him a pannikin of ragout. Said Skobeleff, "Do as I do, Villiers."

We walked down the line, each holding a spoon, tasting the contents of the soup kettles and pronouncing them good. The cooks then made a left turn and filed off toward the camp.

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Skobeleff was very fond of doing these little things. He used to say that "the rations of the men should be good enough for the general."

At the roll call, after a fight, the general would step up to certain units and compliment them on their personal bravery, having, he would say, "had his eye upon them" during the action. His soldiers all loved him for these little touches of frank comradeship and they would have marched to the very jaws of hell if Skobeleff led them.

During dinner we were talking about the Turks, for whom the general had a great admiration, as he loved a brave enemy.

"I wonder," said he, as we sat at table, "why those men fight like fiends?"

"It's probably their religion," I replied. "And, after all, it's some inducement to a poor devil who is half-starved and has very little of the pleasures of this life to know if he dies killing a Christian he passes into a world where his stomach's always full and his harem contains the most lovely houris imaginable."

"Ah!" said Skobeleff. "There's something in that."

"Then," I pointed out, "your men are just as fanatical. They fight for their particular God, the Great White Tsar and Holy Russia."

"Yes, that's so, too," laughed Skobeleff; then, turning to his French guest, "And you, monsieur; what do you fight for?"

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Gesticulating, as some Frenchmen will, he sprang up, posed herocially, and said, "*Ah, pour la gloire!*"

"Bravo! And now you English?"

"Well! Probably the greatest aspiration of all."

"Vat's dat?" smiled the Frenchman.

"Why, British interests, of course," said I.

Both he and Skobeleff laughed heartily at this.

"Do you know," said Skobeleff, "I love you English. I have never visited your country, but I consider you a wonderful people. I admire you so much I should like to fight you. I want to see the red-coat and come in touch with the 'thin red line.' And," he continued, "we are very likely to be soon at close quarters with it. Now look here, Villiers, if there is war between England and Russia, you come with us."

"This is awfully good of you, general; but you must know that the 'thin red line' you lately alluded to has never been beaten. What if you should get a reverse?"

"Have no fear; you will be safe with me. Just think it over—how novel it would be; how international your profession would become. Think it over," laughed Skobeleff. "Good night."

Next morning there was no news of MacGahan, so Skobeleff wired to Constantinople for information regarding him. The reply was, "Seriously ill. Unconscious."

The general was excessively concerned by this somber intelligence. "Villiers," he said, "you must

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return at once. I am afraid the poor fellow is in a very bad way. This looks like black typhus"—a plague that was raging at that time in Constantinople."

"General, there's no train until this evening."

"That makes no difference," said Skobeleff. "Take my white charger. He is fleet, and if you manage him well you will be in Constantinople in less than three hours."

I was almost staggered with the responsibility of riding the general's charger, the famous horse which had carried him through so many fights. What if anything should happen to the animal? It was therefore with a feeling of pride and at the same time of fear that I mounted. The morning was dull and lowering. The road, soddened with nearly a week of incessant rain, was one long slough of mud. But Skobeleff's charger was good enough for any road, however heavy, and away we galloped. The early morning drizzle turned into a downpour of pitiless rain that simply soaked my ulster through and through. This garment was made of homespun, with a dash of the martial aspect thrown into it by a red woolen lining.

When at last I had crossed the dreary, treeless, undulating, sterile country between the Russian camp and Constantinople and arrived in the Moslem city, I took off the bedraggled ulster and placed it across the pommel of my saddle. Winding through a labyrinth of narrow streets I

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found myself an object of interest alike with Mussulman and Christian wayfarers. Intent on my all-important errand, I paid no attention to these curious glances; but when I arrived at the door of my club, to my horror and mortification, on looking at the steaming charger I found that from his withers to his flanks he was stained with the dye of the magenta lining of my ulster. For hours I scrubbed at that horse without avail, and when Skobeleff turned up by the evening train I had to apologize for the still ruddy hue of his famous charger.

I found that MacGahan was dead. No one was allowed to see his body for fear of spreading the disease. However, when Skobeleff arrived by the afternoon train he pushed aside the guard at the door of the death chamber and knelt beside the corpse and burst into tears. He was so overcome and his face swollen with crying that I had to take him to my room, where he remained till the signs of his grief had passed away.

After MacGahan's funeral, knowing that Skobeleff always wished to meet his great adversary, Baker Pasha, I thought I could arrange a meeting.

Skobeleff used to say to me whenever he had a severe setback in his advance to Constantinople that one of my countrymen was at the bottom of the business. The Turks could never rally like this unless they had a great leader. One morning he told me he knew the man and his name was Baker, for it was on the lips of every prisoner. Remember-

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ing this conversation, I decided to bring them together during this armistice period by asking them to dine at the Club Commercial at Maritime in the Grand rue de Pera, the very club where I had met this same Valentine Baker hardly two years before, a very despondent man, practically exiled from his country. When we entered the lounging room of the club he stood toasting his back before a roaring fire, waiting for his great adversary. As I walked toward him, escorting Skobeleff, he stepped forward with outstretched hands which my general seized. They looked into each other's eyes, and then Skobeleff greeted Baker in Russian fashion by kissing him on both cheeks and he reciprocated in like manner. Then they commenced chatting and took their seats at the table. It was a delightful meeting which I shall never forget. I remember that Skobeleff was so overcome by the hospitality of the occasion that in the small hours of the morning I had to see him to bed.

Alas! Skobeleff and Baker have both joined the heroic dead. But these two men thrilled the whole civilized world with their wonderful exploits just over forty years ago.

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Chapter VII

EASTERTIDE IN PALESTINE

My pilgrimage—I am shot at by the way—The rock of Andromeda—Richard Cœur de Lion—As in the days of the Apostles—The sepulcher—Maundy Thursday—Holy fire—The Wall of Wailing, and many other things—My first love—I follow her to Jericho—And lose her in Constantinople.

SO long as the armistice between Turkey and Russia remained in force there was little for me to do. Therefore I decided to have a change of air, as typhus was still rampant; so I cabled to my paper that I was leaving for Syria to sketch the ceremonies during Easter week in Jerusalem, and that I would be within touch if hostilities broke out between England and Russia. I went to say good-by to Skobeleff and told him that I was going for a holiday to Palestine. "Who knows," said he, "if when you return you will find England embroiled and we shall be fighting her. Remember my invitation when we last met."

I never saw him again. His yellow beard, tanned face, and gray eyes glowed in the light of the declining sun; the background was the thin smoke of the camp fires through which the moon was be-

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ginning to glimmer. This last picture of him I shall never forget.

I was keen to see the Holy City as a pilgrim sees it, and therefore I simply took a haversack with me containing a change of linen, toilet requisites, a mosquito curtain, stout boots, and three important books—*Baedeker's Guide*, Renan's *Christ*, and Mark Twain's *Innocents Abroad*. With this modest outfit I found myself one morning steaming through the Dardanelles, en route for Judea.

The Austrian Lloyd steamers were excellent in those days and I found I had a cabin all to myself; this was a great comfort, for generally at the pilgrimage season there is hardly deck room, for Easter in Jerusalem is the most stirring time of the year. Pilgrims from all parts of the globe arrive in large numbers to worship at the shrines of the Holy Sepulcher. Not only Christians assemble in the Holy City, but Moslems from all parts of Turkey and the East come to glorify their Prophet at the great Mosque of Omar.

It was lucky that very few pilgrims from Russia were able that year to attend Greek Easter, for it no doubt saved the Holy City the trying ordeal of witnessing many serious struggles which the meeting of Muscovite and Moslem fanatics would have occasioned. The disturbances between the Greek and Latin Churches, which very often led to a bloody issue, were scandalous enough, for they were even carried within the precincts of the Holy Church,

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The journey was one of great interest; we touched at all the principal ports along the coast and at many of the islands in the Ægean Sea, allowing the pilgrim sufficient time to look about him. It was a gloomy morning and threatened rain when we made our first stop at Smyrna, and I was apparently the only pilgrim who was interested in the ruins of the castle fortress looming above the old city. I sauntered up the hill and examined the remarkable stratum of oyster shells that crop out on the left of the highway at the turn leading to the Castle, which Mark Twain so humorously tries to account for in his *Pilgrimage*.

On rounding the corner I slowly wended my way to the ruins. As I approached, I saw the figure of a Zebeck—picturesque Asia Minor Bashi-Bazouk with a wondrous tall turban on his head and a huge yataghan and two silver-mounted pistols stuck in his broad, red leather belt. I came to a halt, and mused as to whether I should commence making a sketch of this splendid fellow, for he stood in his magnificent costume as if he were posing, having guessed my intention. Then, to my astonishment, he quietly drew one of those shimmering pistols from his belt, leveled it at me and fired. I saw the flash of the flint and steel and of the powder in its pan. For a moment I seemed paralyzed, but the whistle of the ball sounding close to my head served to waken me to the seriousness of the situation. He was drawing the second pistol from his belt

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when I clapped my hand on my hip pocket and rushed at him. To my horror my revolver was not there. Anyway, I quickly made up my mind to butt him in the stomach before he could aim. But the fellow had seen my pocket action, and thinking that I had a six-shooter, turned and fled.

I saw that he was well on his way and then I turned and sprinted in the opposite direction, vowing that I should never again be found wandering far afield without my gun.

I had time to rush off to Ephesus and spend two hours among the ruins, and looked upon the tomb of the Evangelist Luke, stood where Paul preached, conjured up from the murky pool of water the glorious temple of the Great Diana of the Ephesians, where now among its squalid ruins only the frogs lift up their voices to the great goddess. For a few hours I wandered on the Isle of Rhodes through its scanty plains, saw the famous rue Chevalier of St. John, its fine old hospices and the spot where once stood the Colossus.

But all of these places of interest seemed to be as nothing to my anticipation of the wonders of the Holy Land. Even the cup of Cyprian wine at Cyprus merely caused a conjecture as to whether the ancient imbibers of that liquor suffered from indigestion, or whether from its extreme acidity it might really have been the wine that dissolved the pearls of Cleopatra.

There was the usual swell along the coast of Pal-

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estine which caused our ship to roll uneasily even when anchored off its shores, and tended to choke all emotion that I might have had in my bosom at the first sight of the hills of Judea.

As we steamed along the morning sun gently raised the veil of mist from the mountains and discovered to the pilgrim early on deck the long-looked for Holy Land. But the incessant see-saw motion of our steamer occupied the attention of most of the voyagers at that auspicious moment. And it was with a matter of indifference to them that Jaffa gradually rose with its steep rock out of the gray shore and caught the first rosy tints on its housetops as day broke across the water.

In a few moments several boats pushed off and were pulled rapidly toward our ship by stalwart Assyrians. As they arrived alongside there was a general rush of pilgrims—Moslems, Christians, and Jews. During the noise, struggle, and general confusion we were hustled down the side of the vessel by our dragoman into a large four-oared boat and we pushed off for the shore. When we were still some little distance from the beach, dark-looking rocks, like mighty fangs, rose out of the surf, which raced and boiled round them with fury. With much trepidation we steered for a passage between two of these dangerous natural breakwaters. With a supreme effort, our men tugging hard at the oars, we ran past the jagged black teeth into calm water and made for the beach.

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One must pity poor Andromeda, for she must indeed have had a hard time of it on rough days, what with the surf and the sea monster. For it is to one of these Jaffa rocks that tradition chains the undulating figure of the fair daughter of Cepheus and Cassiopeia, whose agonies so often appear on the walls of the picture academies of the world. Here, too, Jonah, as my American friend observed, "took a state cabin in the eternal economy of the whale."

On landing we made straightway for Hardegg's nice little hotel and took breakfast of eggs that were certainly not overboiled, for here I was initiated into the mystery of the American way of eating soft eggs, broken into a glass and stirred up with salt and butter.

Threading our way at walking pace through strings of camels, with beggars and lepers crying for baksheesh, we arrived outside the town, when we began to trot toward the hills of Judea, passing through groves of oranges and hedges of prickly pear which made the air fragrant as a gentle breeze from the sea wafted the scent along the dusty road and sweetened the atmosphere for miles.

Our dragoman continually pulled up the wagon and, standing up, would majestically point out the places hallowed by the traditions of the country, as we passed by. So many were the places of interest, and so few the ones to which I could attach credit, that not many were retained in my memory.

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I passed Ramleh and Bet Nula, where Richard Cœur de Lion pitched his tents after the first day's march to Jerusalem—which, by the bye, was a good day's march indeed. It is a curious coincidence that in my little country home at Bedhampton, near Langstone Harbour in Hampshire, one of the fields near my cottage was the camping ground of Richard and his Crusaders before he set sail on his great venture. We saw the valley in which David killed Goliath, and on the left, Mizpah and the birthplace of John the Baptist.

Reaching a rugged part of the road, for an hour or more we struggled over rocky ground on foot, and then a short jaunt in my wagon brought me in view of the Holy City. Just as the last rays of the sun were dying out of the heavens—lighting up in russet golden glamour its old walls, domes, and minarets—we entered the Jaffa Gate. However much my guide had shaken my belief in many holy places along the route, as I passed by the crumbling walls of this weird and wonderful city I almost shivered with a thrill of awe; for at this time—probably this very day just eighteen hundred and twenty-five years ago—Jesus of Nazareth suffered martyrdom for the world within sight of those very ramparts.

At six the next morning the sound of the clanging of bells awakened me to go to the great Latin Mass, for it was their Easter Sunday, and the Greek Palm Sunday. I made my way to the top of the Holy

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Sepulcher and entered a door just below the dome, finding myself in a little gallery whence I could look over the chapel of the Holy Sepulcher and upon the scene below. The tomb in which the body of the Meek and Lowly was supposed to be laid was gaudy with pictures, artificial flowers, silver and gold lamps, gilt candlelabra and burning tapers. Surging round its walls was a noisy crowd as motley in garb as figures in the scene of a pantomine—Copts, Abyssinians, Assyrians, Greeks, Latins, and Moslem guards. It is necessary that a strong Turkish guard be placed in the building to keep the members of the various Christian churches from quarreling with each other, instead of worshiping at the sepulcher.

Presently a jingle of bells, beating of gongs, and the strains of an organ ascended along with the fatty smoke of a thousand tapers from the jostling crowd below; then from the Latin chapel a procession of bishops and priests in gorgeous array, with banners of cloth of gold, slowly wended their way through the crowd, chanting and praying amid a steam of incense. Before they were quite finished, the Greeks, Armenians, and Copts began to hold their respective services and tried to drown the voices of their rivals, as they went through their devotions.

During the following week the Greeks had the church to themselves. On Thursday the Patriarch and twelve bishops enacted Christ and His Apostles, the Washing of the Feet, the Last Supper, and

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the Agony in the Garden. A platform was erected in the courtyard of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, decorated with relics and emblems of the Church. A huge branch from the olive tree in the Garden of Gethsemane, under which Christ prayed, was used in the ceremony, and after the service was over the crowd scrambled for its sprays.

It was the Easter only of the year before that I was in London and present at a time-honored custom of giving presents to the poor on Maundy Thursday, the day before Good Friday—a modification of this very ceremony I now witnessed in Jerusalem.

The early kings and queens of England used to kiss and wash the feet of a number of paupers and beggars on that day, in imitation of Christ and His Apostles. But this ceremony has now dwindled simply to giving largess, and since the reign of James II royalties have not figured in the matter at all. On that occasion, which I sketched, the Lord High Almoner gave doles to fifty-eight men and women, the number of each sex corresponding to the age of Queen Victoria, in the Chapel Royal of the old palace of Whitehall. A detachment of the picturesque Yeomen of the Guard, or "Beefeaters" as they are facetiously called, was present, one of whom bore upon his head a huge golden salver of the time of William and Mary, which contained the royal alms. Then a service was held and between the chants and hymns the gifts were distributed, each pauper receiving two pound ten in gold coins

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and fifty-eight new penny pieces, together with a number of articles of clothing.

However, the most amazing event of all the wonderful week in Jerusalem was the function of the Holy Fire. The Church of the Sepulcher was left open all night Friday and hundreds of zealots camped upon the flagstones. Early the next morning the place began to be packed with pilgrims who became more and more frantic every moment. They shouted and yelled and clapped their hands, and to amuse themselves more fully a few would chase each other over the heads of the densely packed crowd, wrestling and struggling back into the mass as they were tripped up by their irate brethren underneath them. The Moslem guard, though in much stronger force than usual, seemed to have little control and, in order to keep the peace, had to use the butt-ends of their muskets. Water was served round to quench the parched mouths of the worshipers, and often there was a bloody mêlée to get a drop of the precious liquid.

After a procession of bishops and priests had passed three times round the outskirts of the crowd, the Patriarch entered the Sepulcher. Now the noise and hubbub became more deafening. A priest standing before the two oval windows in the side of the tomb thrust his hand in one of them. Then the pandemonium reigned supreme. The masses hustled and squeezed in their endeavor to press toward the window, shouting and yelling till

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they grew hoarse with their exertions, making the place more like an inferno than a Church of Christ.

In a twinkling the whole building, which until now had been in semidarkness, became brilliant with light as the church candles were lit by the priest who rushed along passing his flaring brand to others standing ready by the candelabras. Then the Holy Fire flamed out of the windows and torches were thrust into it by the mob. One of the first caught and the delighted bearer with a yell of triumph managed to struggle up with it onto the heads of his packed brethren and skim over them toward the door.

He was within a yard of his goal when he was tripped up and fell sprawling, and his flare died out and was wrenched from his grasp. The disaster was too much; thinking he was doomed to misery for life, he began to rave, and was thrown out of the church by the Moslem guard, a gibbering lunatic. The crowd below was now a mass of moving flame, for all had their torches afire. The fumes of the melting tallow as it hissed and guttered, filling the church with unctuous black smoke, nauseated and choked me. I hurried away, glad to get into the open once more.

All through this eventful Easter week Jerusalem, generally so silent in the sleepy shadow of her narrow streets, had been stirred abustle by thousands of *kajji* of all denominations. Even a few fair American and English pilgrims, having done the cities of

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western Europe and steamed up the Nile, made their way to the Holy City and showed their pretty faces on which the sun had cast a healthy russet glow. Their yashmaked and veiled Oriental sisters also thronged the streets on this occasion in hideous white or flowered shrouds, all ajostle with stately Arab, lounging Turk, and white, blear-eyed Jew. The sickening fumes of the ill-washed crowd of Orientals and the tar-patched camels thickened the atmosphere. I was heartily glad the many services were over, and that I could now leave the stifling streets for the fresh air of the country.

On the road to Bethlehem, a short distance from Jerusalem, I came across Rachel's Tomb, rather an unimportant-looking building of white plaster, revered alike by Moslem, Christian, and Jew; for it was here Rachel died giving birth to Benjamin.

By approaching the birthplace of Christ by way of the Pools and Gardens of Solomon, I could somewhat understand (what puzzled me before) how the peasant subsists, for although the general appearance of the country is barren and sterile, here the path to Bethlehem lies through one of the many strips of valleys full of fruit and corn, which intersect the barren heights round about the City of Zion.

Passing along a ridge of rocks, by the side of an old aqueduct which led from the Cisterns of Solomon, I suddenly came upon Bethlehem, rising out of a valley of dark olives, and wending my through the trees mounted the narrow streets and came upon

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women in picturesque garb washing clothes by the side of a well. I was struck with their beauty. My guide told me that the women of Bethlehem were noted for their comeliness, then I remembered that the tradition was handed down from the days of Christ.

It is but rarely one meets a pretty face in Syria, but Bethlehem may indeed carry off the palm for the beauty of its female inhabitants. Many are the swains who come from less favored towns to seek the pretty faces. The general custom with the people of Bethlehem is, however, to marry among themselves. The betrothal is made at rather an early stage of existence. I passed some little children playing on a doorstep; one of the kiddies, a girl about seven years of age, was assisting a boy to build up a house with pebbles. She wore a locket around her neck which my dragoman took into his hand, explaining to me that it was worn as a sign of her engagement to be married. The little girl evidently understood the situation, for she ran away and hid her face against the wall. The youth of her choice, about nine years old, looked uncertain whether to express his indignation of our treatment of his sweetheart by aiming a stone at us, or taking the baksheesh we offered him.

I was introduced to a well-to-do young farmer of seventeen autumns who was already blessed with a wife and family. I believe that his parents and several young ladies thought that when he had

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passed his sixteenth birthday he was becoming a confirmed bachelor, but at last Bethlehem beauty smote him hip and thigh before he was yet in time to invest in a latchkey.

However, the birthplace of Christ is not visited by the pilgrim for the manner and customs of its present inhabitants, but for the Chapel of the Nativity, and the many other holy places, though one must not imagine that he is shown the veritable manger, for the only genuine one was discovered by the Empress Helena and packed and forwarded to Rome. This Church of the Nativity is crowded with Scriptural relics and historical sites, like the church at Jerusalem, all conveniently near one another. The weary pilgrim must continually bless the Empress Helena and other searchers for Scriptural truths who have arranged these things so considerately for his convenience.

The Jews also do their little pilgrimage to the Wailing Place against the walls of Zion. Here, every Friday, men and women, carrying huge and tiny Hebrew prayer books, wail in their sorrow for the departed majesty of Zion, pull their earlocks and beards and wring their hands; and the women—young and old—sob themselves into hysterics over the fallen greatness of the place. A touching scene is presented by many an eager pilgrim leaning against the weather-beaten wall, kissing the stone and weeping till his face is swollen with grief.

On going up to the Mount of Olives we crossed

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the Valley of the Kedron, also called the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There is a tradition, founded on a misinterpretation of Joel iii:2, that this gorge will be the scene of the Last Judgment. We found the famous mount inclosed in an irregular quadrangle within a high plastered wall. On knocking at the wicket we were admitted by an old Franciscan monk who permitted us to view the garden. It was prettily laid out with flowers of the brightest hues. We were told that the olive trees were the same under which Christ prayed and the disciples slept; but when Titus occupied the environs of the city thirty years after the Crucifixion he is known to have cut down all trees for the use of his army, and the Crusaders testified some fifteen hundred years afterward to finding the whole region absolutely destitute of wood. As I knew only too well what armies will do for the sake of cover and camp fires, I began to have as much faith in the history of those trees pointed out at Gethsemane as I had already in the verity of most things exhibited in the Holy Land.

In this neighborhood is the Chapel of the Tomb of the Virgin. Her parents and also Joseph, her husband, are supposed to be buried somewhere hereabouts. Here is also the Cavern of the Agony. The sight which impresses one more than any other in or about the City of Zion is the magnificent view from the Mount of Olives. Within a quarter of an hour after leaving Gethsemane one may look down upon the Valley of the Jordan and the cobalt-blue

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of the Dead Sea, stretching away through the gray hills on the east, while toward the north are seen the upper stretches of the Valley of the Kedron (beyond which rises the Scopus), and to the west the once mighty city of Jerusalem, with its stones of the Holy Sepulcher and the Mosque of Omar, its ancient walls and minarets.

Under the dome of the Mosque of Omar stands the famous rock on which the Jews offered up their sacrifices and where Abraham was about to slay Isaac, where Moslem tradition places Mohammed's ascension to heaven on his miraculous steed El-Burak. The altar on that occasion was about to follow the horse and the Prophet, and might now have been with them in glory but for the strong objection of the Angel Gabriel, who evidently did not so much mind the horse as he resented the rocks entering heaven, for he held this peripatetic mass of stone down to the earth—and strenuous work it must have been! He evidently had an enormous fist, judging by the finger marks he has left imprinted upon the rock.

Pilgrims, when once in the Holy Land, after visiting His birthplace and the spot where Christ suffered death, ought not forgo taking a longer journey from Jerusalem to the town wherein he lived and spent his boyhood's days—Nazareth. The present town is built on the site of the ancient Nazareth, and lies in a basin on the south slope of Jebel-es-Sikh, embosomed in a framework of cactus

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hedges, fig and olive trees. We were shown the kitchens of the Virgin, and house and workshop of Joseph, and the synagogue in which Christ is said to have taught, also the table at which Christ supped for the last time with his disciples. I wondered if they dined at tables in those days, or squatted, as Orientals have for thousands of years, round dishes placed on the floor.

As this book is supposed to be a chronicle of my adventures, I think it would not be quite fair to my readers if I did not take them into my confidence and confess that although I arrived in Judea full of fervor for its holy traditions, as a good pilgrim should be, everything of a spiritual kind was, so to speak, wiped off the slate in the flutter of an eyelid one morning at breakfast in our monastery *pension*, when I found I was beginning to worship at the shrine of the mundane in the form of the most beautiful creature (first loves are all like this) whom I had ever seen up to that date in my vagrant life.

My heart went out to her sweet presence the instant I set eyes on her, as she trifled with a boiled egg. I would not attempt to describe her poise and beauty. I will simply say that she was a peach; she was even more lovely than that tender, luscious fruit, for she had blue eyes and peaches don't run to azure. In fact, she was as pretty as a pink! Though I worshiped that lovely slender thread of humanity, I was too much enamored ever to speak to her. I would gladly converse with her charming

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mother and sister, but my tongue as I strove to address her "clove to the roof of my mouth," as they say in novels, and I became speechless. Therefore, I was never able to ask her if she returned my passion and, by way of recompense, I was saved the bitter humiliation of a negative. After days of fruitless endeavor to approach her, one morning I summoned up sufficient courage to present her with a bouquet. She simply said, "Thank you."

I was so stunned with her proximity that my tongue began the "cloving" business, and she buried her fair face in the flowers and smothered her ripple of girlish laughter. I followed her to Jericho, but my camel, wretched brute, was evidently at outs with her ship of the desert, and I could never get alongside of her. If I could but succeed, I thought, our misery on those ugly monsters' humps might have brought us together in common sympathy, but it was not to be. I never saw her again, though I followed the little family to Constantinople and called at their hotel. The mother and sister received me, but she, my sunny shrine (I forgot to mention her hair, which was the most gleaming auburn I ever tried to put on canvas), was not in. A year later I hunted all over the world for her, sought her in San Francisco, Salt Lake City, and in New York. I was getting quite warm on her track in Gotham when an imperative cable from my paper urged me homeward, for there was another campaign in sight, and alas! my "quest of the golden girl" ended in failure.

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Chapter VIII

HILL FIGHTING FIERCE AND BLOODY

The beginning of the trouble—Off to India—A memorable ride—The mystery camp—I am toasted—I guide the guides with my luminous pony—Where women wear the breeches—Cavagnari—Back to India with the treaty—Through the hills—Across the plains—The dark bungalows and the daks—An enjoyable "sudden death"—The first Earl Lytton and his court—I leave for "Down Under."

THE threatened hostilities between England and Russia never came off, so Skobeleff's invitation to join his army fell through. But as a caution to Great Britain not to call upon her Indian armies to assist her in Europe (a contingent of native troops had already been sent to Malta), Russia threatened to stir up trouble on the northwest frontier of India. This threat was soon actually carried out, for owing to Russian machinations the Ameer of Afghanistan became truculent and had to be taught a lesson by a considerable force of combined British and Indian troops, which was sent to occupy Cabul, the capital of that ghastly, sterile country. At the very beginning, the Ameer's troops holding the famous fortress of Ali Musjid stopped our advance at the mouth of the Khyber Pass, and

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the fat was in the fire. I hurried off by a P. & O. mail packet to Bombay and joined the British under the late Gen. Sir Sam Browne, the inventor of the famous belt so popular with all officers of the Allied armies in the recent war. With the capture of Ali Musjid we practically opened the gates of Afghanistan and our armies poured through her passes and valleys.

I had many adventures in the Khyber. The fighting there was always fierce and bloody, for the Afghans and the adjacent tribes are cruel and merciless in their methods of warfare. But in spite of this they were looked upon by British soldiers as sportsmen, for they always put up a game fight. During the advance into the heart of the country toward Jellalabad, there was no better officer in Her Majesty's service than Colonel Tytler, V.C. A tall, gaunt man, some six feet two, he made a striking figure when he rode at the head of his regiment of plucky little dare-devil Ghoorkas, few of whom stood more than six inches above the Colonel's waistbelt. Archibald Forbes, who had already arrived at the seat of hostilities, had described this officer to me, expressing his admiration for his soldierly character and his affection for the genial amiability of the tall soldier's nature.

I was looking forward to a pleasant time with him, since that intrepid war correspondent had given me a chit of introduction. But my journey to his advanced position was fraught with adventure and

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my first acquaintance with that heroic general (for he had been made brigadier) was, to say the least of it, by no means encouraging.

I left the British camp outside Jellalabad without having notified my intentions to headquarters, since there was a possibility of danger on the road and the anxiety of the officials for my safety might have delayed my departure until a convoy could be arranged. My bearer was a Mussulman, a man of fine courage and alertness, but my syce was a Hindoo, who had a marked weakness for the safety of his own dusky skin. So the syce I mounted upon my baggage camel, and Whewas Khan, my bearer, and I would alternately share the smart little tat or mountain pony which my good friend Forbes picked up for me at the beginning of the campaign.

Cholera had broken out severely in the Punjab and was stealing steadily up through the Afghan passes, proving a more ruthless enemy to the British soldier and his dusky brethren-in-arms than the most fanatical of the tribesmen. The heat was intense—some 114 degrees in the shade during the day and 106 degrees clear through the night until dawn, when the mercury immediately rose with the sun. The stones littering the route were so baked with the sun's rays that it would have been difficult to take one up and place it in one's pocket without burning one's fingers.

My poor pony suffered much from his blistered feet, his temper being what I should imagine

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of a performing bear's when dancing on hot tiles. Limping along painfully throughout the afternoon, toward sunset we approached the rocky eminences near Basawul, which were supposed to overshadow Tytler's encampment.

The rocks glowed like huge coals in the fierce glint of the dying sun. The air was so thick and nauseating with the stench of dead camels that one could hardly breathe. As the sun dropped below the horizon, blood-red flashes of fire like gigantic rubies studded the plain in our immediate front, but to our disgust we discovered that the departing light was merely glinting on the metal casing of biscuit tins and the debris of a deserted camp. Black night quickly settled over the valley, and with it came a depression over our little party that it was difficult to shake off.

It was, indeed, an unfortunate situation and a dangerous one, too, for after nightfall the local tribesmen had the cheerful wont of cutting up all camp followers and stragglers not yet within the British lines. I looked at my two servants. The syce was in a hopeless state of funk, but Whewas's teeth gleamed in the dying day—and whenever the Mohammedan showed his ivories I knew he was bracing himself for an emergency. We kept the groom between us to steady his nerves.

Soon the atmosphere became so dense and stifling that it seemed like battling with a gauze shroud. Parched with thirst and sick with hunger we still

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struggled onward, straining our eyes in search of Tytler's camp.

Presently a light leaped up out of the blackness. I immediately whispered a halt. Now, like will-o'-the-wisps, flecks of fire danced in front of us. Could this be a bivouac of the enemy? I told my servant to remain where he was while I crept forward. After stumbling down a deep-cut *nullah* and clambering up the opposite bank, I could discern in the distant play of the fires a few white tents. It was the British encampment. I would have shouted for joy, but I knew that any noise would have brought a sharp fusillade in our direction. I stole back to my servants and we boldly advanced.

"Halt! Who come dah?" shouted the native sentry.

"Friend," I replied.

"Parse, fren: alisvel!" answered the Goorkha.

The news of our approach spread rapidly, and out of a large marquee hurried two or three officers.

"Glad to see you," said one as I rolled out of my saddle.

"Qui-hye!" shouted another, "brandy peg low. Tuldi Karo!" In the twinkling of an eye a servant appeared with the cooling draught, a big soda-and-brandy with a dash of snow in it from the Safed Koh or Whitecap Mountain, which loomed over the valley. I greedily drained the peg.

"That's only to moisten your throat," they said.

"Have another, just to quench your thirst—and

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then we will allow talking. You are the first we have seen for an age."

"Well," thought I, "this is indeed hospitable."

"Why, it's Villiers—good fellow! Just in time for dinner," cried the officers in chorus.

My men went off with their kind and I was hustled into the mess tent. As I seated myself at the table, faces beaming with good nature turned to mine. I inwardly congratulated myself. I had never met with more cordial hospitality in my life.

As I commenced to eat, an orderly entered the tent and whispered to one of the officers, who immediately got up and followed him out. Then another orderly spoke to the man on my left.

"Excuse me, Villiers," and he hurriedly disappeared.

Soon the one sitting opposite me was summoned in the same mysterious way. By and by the first who had quitted the tent came back. All eyes were anxiously turned on him.

"Any more?" asked one.

"How many?" inquired another.

The answer slowly came, "Two; worse luck."

"Oh, that's nothing! We had three before soup last night."

I turned to the man on my right and asked, "What are they talking about?"

"Fresh cases," he replied.

"Cases?" I exclaimed with no little astonishment. "Cases of what?"

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"Well," he grimly smiled; "not champagne—

I must have still looked bewildered. "Ah! Ah! Good joke that," I rejoined, rather stupidly.

"You don't understand," said he. "Cholera, of course."

"Cholera! Oh, yes; I see," I faintly murmured. then did it strike me that these officers' uniforms had a very familiar look. My genial friends were all medical men. Now I could understand their delight in seeing me—their sad lack of news. I had struck a cholera camp! These poor fellows had been isolated from the outer world for months. I almost choked with emotion. My heart seemed to sink into my boots. I tried to pull myself together, poured out another peg and was about to swallow it, when the doctors lifted their tumblers and drank my health.

"So good of you to take pity on us. Just like you war correspondents. Don't seem to care a fig for anything."

"Well," thought I, struggling against a chill that seemed to freeze my heart, "anyway, I must keep up the reputation with which our profession has been so handsomely credited."

So I staggered to my feet and responded to the toast. I told them that as I was passing by I thought I would look them up—in my province as a war correspondent it was only right; in fact, my duty. I protested that I was never happier in my life, and they could look upon me as a veri-

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table special edition. I would give them all the news I contained.

After a short conversation—but a very long one to me—I shared the tent of one of the doctors, but not his slumbers. I was never so wide awake in my life, and I vowed that if I found myself alive at dawn I would hurry from that pestilence-stricken camp before breakfast. During the night a hot wind sprang up, coming upon us like the breath from a baker's oven, choking us with dust and flaying our faces with burning particles of sand. Lights flickered from tent to tent as the surgeons went about their work, and the groans and wails of the doomed patients were heard above the soughing of the wind. When dawn came many brave men in that bivouac of misery had died. The stretcher-bearers were already carrying their inanimate burdens to the little cemetery on the parched-up plain as I turned my back with a sigh of relief on the cholera-stricken camp.

When we gained the main road to the Khyber the rocks began to glow once more, warming up the valley to a heat one would think would sterilize and disinfect the most pestilence-ridden country in the world. Yet clinging to the shadow of the rocks by the roadside were corpses of stricken hillmen, who had come down from their lairs to cut up stragglers, but had with swift justice been taken by the deadly sickness while waiting for their victims. Never shall I forget the horrible nausea which

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filled the air all the way on this ghastly journey across the plains of Chadeh.

It was nearing sunset once more and we had not yet gained Tytler's command, when presently we saw a cloud of dust on the road, coming in our direction.

"Well, sir, and where is your escort?" said an angry voice, as a tall, gaunt figure on a small gray horse rode toward me.

"I have none," I replied; "only my two servants."

"What, sir! Do you mean to tell me you have ridden here from Jellalabad without protection?"

I was stammering out a reply when the officer interrupted me.

"Damn! Don't think I care a fig about your carcass, sir! It's my men I am anxious about. If you were cut up it would be my duty to rescue your remains, and perhaps in doing so I might lose one or two of my valuable little Ghoorkas. Do you understand, sir? Now you have arrived, kindly keep in camp and report yourself to me this evening." And the peppery officer rode on.

After a wash and brush-up I found upon reporting myself that it was Tytler, V.C., himself whom I had met on the road.

"Well," he said, as he glanced at Forbes's letter, "our first introduction was not a happy one. The fact is, only yesterday we lost three grass cutters. The hillmen sliced them up and left them on the very road you came by this evening. Now, Mr. Villiers, I don't wish to make things unpleasant for

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you, but if you want to sketch outside the actual encampment, I will with much pleasure give you a few Ghoorkas to look after you."

He was as good as his word, and many a sketch I took while his plucky pygmies were scouting round about me.

One of the smartest and most dare-devil officers in the Indian military service I met with Tytler's command was Major Wigram-Battye, of the Guides; and one of the keenest and bravest subalterns was the long-armed Irishman, Pollock Hamilton, of the same famous cavalry. Battye first smelt powder at Saarbruck in '71 with the Prussians, where the unfortunate Prince Imperial received his baptism of fire; and that same day Battye received his, a splinter of a French shell laying him low for many weeks and spoiling his intended holiday—for he was on leave for India, and had, as he said, "looked in at the fun while en route for England."

Our encampment was pitched on a sweltering plain between Lundi Khotal and Jellalabad, where the general with his mixed force was keeping a section of the main highway clear of the enemy. The hostile tribes were busy sniping all round us, and five hundred yards from the camp was a dangerous vicinity. At last this impudent menace to the hated invader compelled Tytler to make reprisals on the caves and lairs of the tribesmen.

Our general was a cautious soldier; little was known of his intended movements by any one in

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camp till the moment he was about to strike. One afternoon I was wandering through the cavalry lines when I espied Battye and young Hamilton seated smoking in the shadow of their tents. On seeing me they would not let me pass till I had taken a peg and a cheroot.

"There's something in the wind to-day," said Battye. "There's an ominous twinkle in the general's eye, and I know we shall see some sport. It's the Cookies this time" (as the Tommies call a blood-thirsty tribe known as the Khoukikails).

I remained smoking and chatting with my friends till sundown, when, as soon as it was dark, an unusual restlessness seemed to possess the camp. Battye puffed at his cheroot vigorously.

"Hamilton," said he, "you have never seen a fight. If one comes to-night you shall go in my place —for some of ours must stay, so we can't both leave the camp."

"By Jove!" responded Hamilton. "It's awfully good of you. Many thanks. Why, here's an orderly from the general coming up the lines."

In another moment Battye had read the chit, and hastily turning to his subaltern, said: "Take fifty of ours and join Utterson. You'll have a good chance of getting in with that 'sword arm' of yours, I hope, before sunrise."

"Villiers, here's a chance for you," added Battye, turning to me. "Go and see what stuff our Guides are made of."

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I hurried back to my tent, ordered my syce to saddle my pony, and within a few minutes joined the Guides at their rendezvous.

It was just the night for a raid—absolutely black and so dense that one could almost feel the darkness.

"Drop that light, you fool! None of that. Pipes out! Pass the word there!" hissed an officer under his breath as the small force crawled noiselessly over the undulating plain.

"Villiers," whispered Hamilton, "do you know what we are going to do?"

"No."

"Well, this is it: We play at this game till just before dawn, when we are supposed to be in a position round a cave village a couple of thousand feet up in the hills," And he pointed to a black mass looming in our front, the Safeh Kho range, whose serrated outlines could just be distinguished as the stars arose and seemed, like beacons, to rest for a moment on the crest ere at last they cleared the skyline and climbed the sky.

"By Jove!" whispered my friend. "It *is* dark in these foothills. Where's that native guide? Ah! There he is."

We were moving in Indian file, and the long, sinuous line of horsemen heaved and sank as it slowly advanced, looking like a mighty serpent writhing its way over the uneven country. One of the troopers behind me, whose horse had been restive for some time, grunted out something in his own

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lingo as the animal suddenly swerved out of line. Hamilton rode up to him, and then a quiet laugh followed.

"Villiers, this trooper says your pony is bewitched. His tail is on fire and this man's horse won't stand it any longer. And, great Scott!—the man's right. Just look at that!" Sure enough, whenever my pony switched his tail a spray of pale-blue light flashed through the air.

"We have got into an electrically charged atmosphere," continued Hamilton, "and your horse is playing the medium. Some of ours may start the racket soon; but, in the meantime, do me a favor: ride by the side of the native pilot and act as an electric torch to show us the road. You will merit the thanks of the Empire if you guide the Guides to glory with that pony's tail."

In a few moments I was in front, proudly leading the way. Next morning, I believe, the following verse was read in camp:

> Freddy has a little horse
> Whose tail was bright as snow,
> And everywhere that Gee-gee went
> The Guides were bound to go.

The tail of my pony went on practically striking matches till dawn stole over the mountain and shut off his usefulness. But night still hung over the plains. Afar off, piled-up, facing the eastern glow and apparently suspended in midair, were the peaks

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of the Hindoo-Khoosh, the highest range in the world, whose snow caps were now roseate pink in the flush of the morning sun.

We snatched a few moments' sleep lying along the backs of our horses who lifted their heads and stiffened their necks till their manes served as pillows—a dodge I had never seen before, and in which Hamilton initiated me. As we waited, the lower peaks of the hills slowly took up the light and the dawn spread down into the valley. Our infantry seemed to be swallowed up in the inequalities of the ground, for apparently we were on the brink of a steep, stony declivity. Below was the entrance to a narrow *khor*, or valley, in the rocky sides of which were the dark mouths of the caves where lurked the enemy.

Not a gleam of daylight had yet penetrated this sullen mountain fastness, and its wild inhabitants were apparently still sleeping. Their ominous *reveille* was, however, near at hand, for suddenly the sharp rattle of musketry broke the stillness, making the blood course through our veins and at once driving the chill of the raw dawn from our bodies. On the rocky ridge our gaunt horsemen now sat as still as the South African assvogel does when about to pounce on its prey. An orderly came galloping up behind us and spoke to the commander.

"What, there?" said Hamilton, as he keenly listened to the man's story and pointed below.

Yes; and no time to be lost, sir."

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Hamilton rode in front of his squadron and gave a sharp word of command to his men. The troopers unsheathed their sabers and long shafts of light clove the air as the first rays of the sun stealing over the hill glinted from the steel. I looked down from the slope. Surely he did not mean the men to take that drop?

"It's certain disaster," thought I. It was a good four hundred feet, almost sheer, to the base. A rifle spoke from among the rocks, then the rattle of the fire became general. Puffs of smoke outlined the ridge of the *khor* in a semicircle, and out from the narrow defile, running like hairs, came the surprised Cookies, leaping the rocks and bowlders, taking cover, or hurrying toward the level below us for the purpose of climbing our hill.

Hamilton waved his sword and in a flash the Guides swept down the terrible declivity. For a moment there was a scattering of stones and streaks of lightning from the sabers, then horses and men were hidden in a veil of dust. When this lifted I saw the hillmen beaten to their knees or running helter-skelter back to their *khor*. The Guides—not a man unhorsed—were slashing and cutting their way through them, till they were lost in the shadows of the valley. My pony had done his work, he had led those gallant horsemen to glory, and now we stood gazing after them. Then we negotiated a less exciting and precipitous path and joined the infantry. Our firing line was still busy, for the devil

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is not easily knocked out of the Afghan. But presently they broke and scattered up the sides of the *khor* under a leaden hail under which it seemed impossible for any being to live.

"For God's sake, don't fire at that! That's a woman!" said I, as a blue-trousered figure fell in front of one of the caves.

"How are we to know t'other from which," growled the trooper, "when the lydies wear trousers and the other beggars sport skirts?"

"Well, you know now, you stupid brute!" shouted a sergeant. The "Cease fire!" was sounding down the line, so I hurried with the surgeon to where the woman had fallen. She was lying in a faint across a native bed in front of the cave. A shot had passed through her thigh. We soon got down on the wound and stopped the bleeding. I was assisting the doctor when I received a kick in the ribs and discovered a small boy, about seven years of age, who, thinking I was hurting his mother, was furiously attacking me with hands, head, and feet. The little brat kept up the assault while we were dressing the woman's wound. Then a crowd of Tommies stood round to see fair play Between us and it was a most ignominious tussle for, at last, I had to sit on him till he was pacified by his mother whom we had meantime made comfortable and rather grateful for what we had done.

Battye's second in command did well for his first fight. He had captured sixty prisoners and rounded

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up eight hundred sheep and kine. That night we changed our diet for roast mutton, after many weeks of bully-beef.

This little hill war was at last settled, thanks to the tact and the knowledge of Afghan character of our political officer, Major Cavagnari, who persuaded the Ameer Yakoub to come and treat with the British. I called the afternoon the major was kneeling, in his shirt sleeves, on the floor of his tent, sealing up the treaty—a long roll of parchment—with wax by the aid of a candle.

His servant brought in a cup of tea. I said, with a smile, "That's poor stuff to drink on an occasion like this. Wait a moment till I bring something else." I ran across the compound to a certain regimental mess where I knew there were a few bottles left and brought back some champagne, and the auspicious event was celebrated in proper manner.

It was a sad day for me when, after being invited by Cavagnari to join his expedition to Cabul, the Viceroy wired to say it was impossible, as only a small party was going—for the arrangement with the Ameer was that only a certain number of English should be sent to his capital, so that their presence should not excite the fanaticism of its populace.

I little thought when I said good-by to the major that it was for the last time and that my life was unwittingly saved by the Viceroy's refusal, for within a month Sir Louis and his gallant party were cut to pieces by the treacherous Caublese.

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I joined the officer carrying the treaty to Simla to be ratified by the Viceroy. In traveling down from Afghanistan to the Indian plains we met with quite exciting times. The stray, convalescing, or dead camels we came across littering the narrow passes of the hills frightened our mountain tats or ponies, and there was always the risk of being bucked over a precipice. Arriving in the Peshawa Valley, we had to take *ekkas* or the *dak gharry*, for railways were few and far between.

There was in those days simply a pontoon of boats across the Indus. Now it is spanned by a fine bridge. What railways there were in the north-west were linked up by the *daks* or post wagons, and to connect with these from outlying districts the *ekka* was used. This was the most uncomfortable of all conveyances in India; the cart was built of bamboo, and was springless, with a sort of umbrella roof to keep the sun off. One's legs were stretched out in front, the feet resting on a bamboo bar that stuck out over the horse's back. The animals were watered by the driver with a shallow pan which suggested giving a saucer of milk to a cat.

The *dak gharry* was a bit more ambitious, but still only a lumbering, oblong vehicle and not upholstered. The baggage was strapped on the roof and the interior consisted simply of bare walls and a floor where was placed one's bedding; for in traveling through India the principal item was the

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bed. Under this was a deep well in which one could put the stores of food made necessary by the fact that on arriving after a weary journey at the *dak* bungalow—the native hotel for travelers—there was absolutely nothing supplied but the bare room. Now the rooms are, in a manner, upholstered, but in the days long ago I had to carry quite a camp outfit to be at all decently comfortable. Yet the manager of the hotel would talk big enough. With a broad grin of welcome on his lank chocolate-hued face, he would say, when I asked him what he had to eat, "Whatever your Highness desires shall be forthcoming!"

A hungry man wants no ambitious dish, so I would order, "Mutton chops and tea." With a courtly smile he would disappear only shortly to return with a sad look of sympathy on his face, saying, "Your Excellency, it is with deep regret the cook tells me there were no sheep to be found to be slaughtered to-day."

"Oh well, a beefsteak will do, but hurry up!" Away he flies and presently comes back again with sad eyes and informs me that the beef in the larder has been carried off by a devil of a pariah and can't be found. "Well," I cry in despair, "What on earth have you got?"

"Your Mightiness, there is a young and tender bird in the compound awaiting the honor of appeasing your Highness's appetite."

"Well, for Heaven's sake, bring it along!" Away

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he would shuffle again and I would hear a considerable scurrying of feet, the flutter of wings, murmurings and cackling from the compound, and finally a loud squawk. After a ten-minute wait the steaming dish is brought with considerable pomp to the table. It goes by the name of "sudden death," yet it is good and remarkably tender in spite of its haste to appease my hunger.

At all the *dak* bungalows down to the line of the railway the same farce was played by the *khansaman;* after all the obsequious lies and palaver there was only one common dish to the menu; that was "sudden death."

The horses supplied by the post en route were fairly good once they were started, and they would gallop all the way without stopping till the next *dak* was reached, but the starting always required time. One pair of beasts I remember took several minutes to move; we tried all kinds of dodges to make them stir. The native hostlers slung ropes round their forelegs, then others with whips waited by their flanks for the blast of the post horn which was the signal for the onslaught. With a jerk that almost capsized it the wagon started on its wild journey to the blast of the trumpet and the shouts and yells of the villagers. Even the pariah dog, no doubt primed with the beefsteak, barked at the heels of the careering steeds, and all for a time went well. There is a legend concerning these *dak* horses that if they once stop between posts, nothing will move

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them but the ignition of a bunch of cornstalks under their bellies.

The railway traveling has always been fairly comfortable. There was plenty of ice handed in at each station in little boxes to replenish the traveler's thawing store. A window on either side was fitted with *tatties*, circular frames of steel covered with coconut matting that slowly revolved with the motion of the wheels, dipping into a trough of water, so that the hot air from outside passed through this wet sieve and was cooled. With an ice pack in a towel on one's head and one's mouth close up to the *tattie* ready to suck in the air whenever the train stopped and shut off the movement of the *tattie*, one could minimize the suffering from heat. It was summer time and the temperature was as only Indian heat can be in June. On arriving at a station it was a common thing to see a dead body removed from a carriage and at once placed in one of the coffins always ready for any unfortunate who had dropped with heat apoplexy.

When I arrived at Simla, the summer quarters of the élite of India, en route to Bombay, Lord Lytton asked me to dine at the Viceregal Lodge. The house party was very bright and gay. An aide-de-camp came up to me and asked, "Whom would you like to take in to dinner? Let your artistic taste go free; choose the prettiest woman and march her in." This was no easy matter, for I had been away from feminine society so long that I was impressed with

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them all so as to be on the horns of a dilemma. At last I, like the Oriental potentate of the legend, threw my handkerchief and sailed away with my beauty. I suppose I was particularly delighted with everything that evening, for I had only a few hours previously finished a ghastly journey; it had been a weary march of six days in a temperature of 114 degrees in the shade, through a cholera area where men lay cramped in agony; for at Jumrod, at the mouth of the Khyber, a squadron of the 10th Hussars had bivouacked, and in less than two hours eighteen strong healthy men were in the throes of the terrible disease. I was, therefore, absolutely enthralled by the welcome change.

His Excellency was exceedingly affable and listened with great interest to my adventures. "We will join the ladies at once," said he, after dinner; "we can smoke our cigarettes with them while Mr. Villiers is showing us his sketches."

This was the first time I was made acquainted with this excellent custom; it was one of his innovations, and he introduced many other free and easy ideas into Indian society, which some of the older and less progressive of his guests looked upon with much perturbation. A few years later I met him as the First Earl of Lytton, at luncheon at the late Lady Dorothy Nevill's house in London. He was much changed and had lost most of his charm of manner and appeared dull and morose. He seemed to be utterly broken in spirit by the vindictive and unfair

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attacks made upon his administration of India by the leaders of the Liberal party.

At Bombay I caught a steamer for the Antipodes, for my paper had sent me instructions to do the opening of the first International Exhibition in Australasia at Sydney, New South Wales.

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DECADE
1880–1890

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Chapter IX

1880–1890

DOWN UNDER

Off to the Antipodes—Dances and pillow-fights by the way—Ceylon—Centuries-old tortoise—Sensitive plants—Sydney, the glory of Australasia—Gayety, fun, and frolic—New Zealand—Her urbane governor—Maoris—An impending rising—The King Country—Pink and white terraces—A seismic upheaval—Hawaii—San Francisco.

THE passage from Bombay to Ceylon was calm enough for dancing, and the P. & O. steamers in those days catered to the amusement of the passengers and endeavored to make them as comfortable as possible. We were allowed to sleep on deck, for the heat in the stuffy little cabins was terrible. The ladies, to appease the ire of our Mrs. Grundy, were shut off from the gentlemen by a *zereba* of deck chairs; and of a morning, in all the glory of their dishabille, they were handed coffee and tea across the barriers. Sometimes, if the night was too hot for one to sleep, a pillow fight would take place between the sexes till the captain came down from his quarters and put an end to hostilities by threatening to send us back to our cabins. Then all

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was quiet till the lascars began to wash down decks, when the ladies were the first to retire, their departure being often accelerated by a few pillows as they skipped down the companionway.

At Point-de-Galle, on the southern end of the island of Ceylon, we had to change steamers for the line running down to the Antipodes. While waiting for the Australian boat, there was time to go ashore and ride down the main street astride the famous centuries-old tortoise, or even to go farther afield to Wakwela to see the sensitive-plant bushes which, on sighting you, would crumple their leaves and wait, closed up, till you had passed. Then they would open out again—one of the most extraordinary phenomena I have ever witnessed.

The captains of the P. & O. boats had the privilege of filling up the odd corners of the holds, which the stevedores could not pack, with coconuts, which they sold to great advantage in Sydney. The famous shipping firm, I believe, is not so generous with its skippers in our days. Our steamer carried two little brass cannon which, on reaching Sydney Heads, were fired by means of a red-hot poker to announce to the citizens that their long-looked-for mail from the Old Country had arrived.

The whole world to-day is acquainted with Sydney harbor, its vastness and beauty. But to me the city was one of the wonders of the universe. I have visited Australia five times and have watched her growth. Here, twelve thousand miles "down under,"

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is a city which for beautiful architecture and up to date sanitary conditions may hold her own with any metropolis in the northern hemisphere.

In 1880 her first International Exhibition had gathered the best from all quarters of the world. The flags of all nationalities fluttered in her harbor. But above all, I shall never forget the hospitality of her inhabitants. It was a month of picnics, dances, races—for all her clubs and houses were open to visitors from Europe.

It now seems incredible, but before the gallant contingents of Australian troops rallied round the old flag and showed their bonny faces and stalwart figures to all Europe during the recent Great War, many people have asked me whether they were mostly blacks in Australia, and one intelligent man, well-informed on most ordinary matters, addressed a letter to me, care the Sydney Exhibition, New Zealand! To reach the latter country in that year from New South Wales took almost as long as from Liverpool to New York.

It was a brilliant, gay, happy time for me—that visit "down under." It was also an indescribable relief to one's nervous system after many years of incessant campaigning. But where'er I go I seem to be a stormy petrel, for there was a threatened rising of the Maoris in New Zealand under De Wit while I was in Sydney, and one day I found myself bound for Auckland, to arrive in Wellington, the capital of the islands, just as an expedi-

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tion was being organized to suppress the impending rebellion.

The genial governor, Sir Hercules Robinson (the late Lord Rosemead), asked me to stay with him at Government House. One night at dinner he said, "I have some bad news for you, Villiers!"

"What's that, sir?" I asked.

"I have settled the Maori dispute; there will be no fighting, but if you want to see a scrap take Lady Robinson to the dog show to-morrow."

Before leaving New Zealand I visited the famous pink and white terraces, a wonderful silica deposit of beautiful tones of color with basins of water of azure blue. This formation is found only in the King Country, reserved for the Maoris. While there I interviewed one of the chiefs. As he conveyed me up to the front terrace I said to him, "How do you like the English?"

"Oh," he replied, "we get along very well with them now, but at first we didn't like them a bit. You see the trouble was this: they first of all sent their missionaries, and they told us to look up to God. Then, while we were looking up to heaven, the English took our lands from us. Then we killed them, and we were so much annoyed that some of us ate them. Then you sent your redcoats to punish us, and though we fought well you eventually crushed us, and now here we are." Which was a concise history of the situation!

Some of the Maori women were quite handsome

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in spite of the custom of tattooing their lips blue. There was a little village called Ohenimutu in which I stayed for a few days, by the side of a lake. It was built over hot springs which bubbled up under the huts and kept the people warm. The women, therefore, wore very little clothing and went about in a very primitive state, and their figures were good to look upon. I used to fish in the lake while they boiled potatoes in a net slung in a hot bubble near by. When I caught anything I flicked my line toward them; they would seize the wriggling piscatory morsel and drop it into the spring with the potatoes, and there was no question of the freshness of the fish when dinner time arrived.

Alas! One day there was a great seismic upheaval and the pretty little village and many of its charming inhabitants were sucked into the lake, for the beautiful pink and white terraces were blown sky-high. The catastrophe involved all the territory in their vicinity, and for years this once paradisaical district became, with its mud cones and spouting geysers and sulphurous atmosphere, a veritable inferno.

I was loath to leave the smiling Antipodes, with all its allurements of hospitality, climate, and beauty of scenery, but I was due in England. So I returned to Sydney, and thence across the Pacific home by Hawaii and the United States. I am certain that no traveler can finish his cosmopolitan education without visiting the great commonwealth "down under."

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Hawaii is certainly the pearl of the Pacific, and it is probably here that that ocean best lives up to its peaceful cognomen, for storms seem to call a halt on approaching this lovely island. When I arrived at Honolulu on my return home from Australia, there was a king on the throne, and under his rule all was happy and Arcadian. This was in the year 1880. But as they always do, the missionaries and other whites eventually stirred up trouble and the inevitable came—annexation by the United States.

King Kalakaua was an amiable monarch and seldom missed coming down to the hard to see the passengers arrive by the mail steamers. He would turn out the palace band, which played sweet music as the voyagers sipped their lemonade or cocktails in the lounge chairs and hammocks on the shady veranda of the quaint wooden hotel on the beach.

The natives treated the guests with great courtesy. In the early days, long before the advent of Captain Cook, they were a magnificent, muscular, copper-colored race. Most of them were as naked as God had made them and were not ashamed. Their morals were no worse than those of the chosen people of the Old Testament. Now in the twentieth century how things have changed! The denizens of Hawaii are dressed in unbecoming European attire, have straight streets, and soda fountains and chewing gum.

The last time I touched Honolulu there was no

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band of music to receive the passengers with a winsome waltz, but a band of a different sort. A revolution had occurred and the white insurgents came on board to search for arms. In those days there was no cable connecting with America and the steamer on which I traveled was suspected of being a filibustering ship.

On landing I found the queen a prisoner. Hawaii was about to go through the mill, an ordeal all small and delightful primitive states have to pass through as grist to the millstone of modern civilization; but though they come out flat and stale, from a picturesque point of view, they very often become more profitable to outsiders as a result of their absorption by a bigger power.

I approached the United States from the Pacific, as the great Drake did when he christened the country "New Albion," and I can just imagine how that respectable buccaneer beat his big tom-tom in delight at the sight of the Golden Gate when he was trying to find a passage into the Atlantic.

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Chapter X

GOTHAM

New York in the '80's—I meet an old friend of Plevna days, and many eminent people—General Sherman, Thomas Nast, Clavering Gunter, Sir H. M. Stanley, Max O'Rell, General Horace Porter, Joseph Jefferson, Bill Nye, Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Richard Mansfield, and Edwin Booth—A night with Edison in his laboratory at Menlo Park——His first filament—I sketch the inventor at work—I lecture at West Point.

I FELL in love with San Francisco at once; I found it so full of light and shade. The things that struck me most were the whole-hearted hospitality of its citizens, its vast, palatial hotel—the largest in the world at that period, and rightly called the Palace—its sea lions, and the most unique club in the universe, the Bohemian, with its bright and witty members who periodically gave evidence of their sparkling geniality in "High Jinks" in their quaint little theater. The club is still going strong and is now located in far more ornate premises; but, alas! the Bohemian spirit seems much diluted. The ghost of prohibition stalks through its palatial halls, and like most clubs of a kindred nature, the high jinks

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of its members can't possibly mount far without an occasional highball.

My first visit to New York was in the time when the Brevoort House and the Fifth Avenue Hotel were the fashionable places at which to stay. I decided to stop at the latter, so I checked my heavy baggage, and with my grips stepped into a heavy, cumbersome hackney coach which was lazily crawling with me and my kit over the then atrociously paved streets to the hotel, when I chanced to see and old campaigning friend, J. P. Jackson of the New York *Herald*, crossing Broadway. I was so delighted to find a friend in a city where I knew absolutely no one that I opened the door of the carriage, slipping out while it was still in motion, and rushed at him. The last time I had seen Jackson was before Plevna with the Russian army. Whenever he had a day off from war duties he went on with his writing of the libretto to Wagner's "Flying Dutchman" for the Carl Rosa Company, living in a Bulgarian hovel and working to the accompaniment of the blast of the siege guns. He told me that the growling rumble of the cannon inspired him in his work.

The happy greeting over, I remembered the cab. It had, of course, continued its lazy way to its destination, and when we arrived at the hotel we found the coachman, a genial Irishman, in a terrible state of anxiety regarding my safety, and especially his fare. He had discovered that I had vanished and

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was now explaining his dilemma to a couple of policemen, thinking that I had been spirited away by one of the many "bunco-steerers."

New York was in those days the most depressing city on earth. Overhead was a labyrinth of telegraph wires, and the streets were a sea of masts. In front of every house or store were boxes or barrels placed on the curb where all refuse was thrown. When the wind was high the dust and cinders from the overladen barrels were whirled into the air, while the litter of paper and rags clinging to the overhead wires made the streets the most dismal and slovenly thoroughfares I have ever traversed. On passing through the remarkable avenues of the clean and stately city of to-day one can hardly realize the condition under which its inhabitants lived forty years ago.

I used to frequent the Brunswick restaurant which stood opposite the famous Delmonico's. It has now been pulled down, but it was an excellent hostelry, quite as good in its way as the more fashionable one across the street, but never so well patronized. I used to watch the overflowing crowds of New York's fashionable "four hundred" waiting in the doorway, and, in fact, on the pavement, for vacant seats at the smart restaurant, and wondered why some of them didn't cross the road and enjoy a luncheon quite as good as Delmonico's in peace and quietude, instead of attempting to eat in the noise and bustle of an overcrowded room. It is curious

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what New Yorkers will pay and suffer to be considered in the fashion.

It was in the saloon of the Brunswick that I heard my first Yankee horse story. I hope it is not a horse chestnut. A man was talking to one or two interested loafers about a fast mare he possessed, and his listeners were rather skeptical. Said he: "Guess I never came across sich a fast animal. Why, she would walk faster than some horses run. Her pace was just terrific, and nothing could stop it. She was fairly wearing herself out, and I was getting kinder rattled about it, when a vet friend put me up to a trick which was real good. He told me to tie a rag round her near foreleg."

"How's that?" inquired the astonished listeners.

"Wal, that mare was a cute cuss. When she spotted the bandage wound round her leg she came to the conclusion that she must have kinder strained herself and shut down to ordinary speed at once."

At this period Edison was experimenting with his incandescent lamp, and my friend Jackson introduced me to the great inventor. I found him at a place called Menlo Park, an out-of-the-way suburb in New Jersey. It was dusk when I arrived and I shall never forget my wonder on first coming across the incandescent electric lamp, now the common light in most parts of the world. On approaching Edison's little estate I found the grounds in front of the house festooned with glass bulbs, which were not always glowing, but instead turned sometimes

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a deep yellow or red and then provokingly faded away altogether.

Mr. Edison greeted me in a genial manner, but I could see he was much worried, so I let him alone and put my questions to some of his subordinates. I was told by one of them that the inventor had not been to bed for many nights, but had dozed in his clothes on a couch in the laboratory to be always on the alert when these little lamps, which were also strung across the workshops, showed any signs of a change in the quality of their light.

Edison looked puffy and unkempt, like a man who had been watching beside a sick bed. He sat in deep thought, his strong, heavy face sunk on to his shoulders. Now and again he would give a sigh of annoyance when a globe suddenly lost its glow and changed color. I understood that it was a question of the carbon filament or the uncertainty of the vacuum within the bulb that puzzled the inventor. I still possess a horseshoe-shaped filament used in the first globes, with which Edison presented me on that memorable evening. During my visit I was able to make a drawing of the inventor in Rembrandt effect, the light of his creation illuminating one side of his powerful face, and the rest in deep shadow. This was published in the *Graphic* and was afterward bought for the Adelaide Art gallery in South Australia.

Before I returned to England Edison had solved the difficulty and found a better medium for the

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light, which was then almost as permanent as it is to-day.

When I visited New York again a decade later, the streets were not much improved, but club life had developed and I enjoyed the hospitality of the Lotos, the Union League, Players, and many others, whose portals were always open to Englishmen visiting the city. During all my after visits I invariably stopped at the clubs instead of the hotels. The Fifth Avenue Hotel was now almost eclipsed by more palatial hostelries, but still it was well patronized. Mrs. Kendal, who was acting in New York, was staying there, and also another actress, Mrs. Langtry. There was evidently a coolness between the rival ladies, which the vigilant New York press reporter soon discovered, for one morning the *Herald* came out with the following interesting news in high captions across the front of the page:

MRS. KENDAL
IS
AT OUTS
WITH
MRS. LANGTRY
AND
PASSES HER ON THE STAIR

I was staying at the Players' in Gramercy Park, the famous house built by Booth the actor, who had

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a suite of apartments on the upper story. I always managed to return to dine about the hour when the grand old man came into the room, and to have a few words with him. He was the stately type of actor who was never "off the stage." To see him descend the stairs to the dining room took one back to the theater at once. There was the grand air of a Richelieu or the mien of a Wolsey in his measured steps.

Between the smoking and dining rooms was a narrow passage, in whose walls were deep-windowed recesses, behind which was a collection of the actor's more special stage properties. Booth would occasionally come to a halt before this little museum, and it was rather pathetic to see him wistfully gaze on crown and scepter which he would never wear or wield again.

The Players' was not exclusively an actors' club. Most of its members were authors, journalists, and artists—without the letter "e." I met here Charles Dana Gibson, who used frequently to dine opposite me. He was a young man with a clean-shaven face and athletic figure, and was already famous for his remarkable pen-and-ink work. He had never crossed the Atlantic. I urged him to do so, pointing out the enormous field for his type of art that lay waiting for his magic touch. It was years after that he came to Europe. His fame had, however, preceded him, and he was then as well known in England as in his own country. There is no other man in the annals

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of art who has so captivated the world by the creation of a special type of beauty and has set the fashion for all civilized womanhood throughout the globe. Indeed, I have seen black, yellow, and red, as well as white, women affect the fashion of headgear that Gibson created in his ravishing pen-and-ink studies.

One of the most popular men in New York at the time of my second visit was the late Mr. Alexander Guild. Of all the many good fellows I have met in my journeys round the world, Guild stands alone for the most perfectly unselfish hospitality. If he invited you to dinner it was his evident pleasure to watch the effect of some choice dish on his favored guest, especially if the invited one was a newcomer to America. He would give a smile of supreme satisfaction when you had done full justice to the choicest of America's fare, terrapin, canvasback duck, or little-neck clams.

When a consignment of pheasants—a rare bird in those days in New York—came from his son-in-law's shooting in the old country, a curt message would be sent round by him to his dearest friends to dine at the Lambs' next Sunday, and a half-dozen good fellows would also enjoy his good luck. A Sunday evening at the Lambs', especially on a "roasting" night, was full of fun. All guests were unmercifully abused and "roasted" if they attempted to respond to any toast or make a speech, and those who were not accustomed to the leg-

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pulling would sometimes lose their temper, which, of course, added to the hilarity of the members. The night Guild invited me to enjoy one of his pheasant feasts, Wilson Barrett was the guest of some other Lambs, and after dinner, not knowing the custom of the club, he had the temerity to get up, in all seriousness, and propose a scheme for a national theater. His suggestion was continually interrupted and was finally attacked in the most offensive and brutal manner by several clever speakers. Barrett turned red, then quite white, as he smarted under the scourge of their spiteful tongues. Then all at once he saw through the joke and rose to the occasion, returning the chaff in the same acrid fashion.

I was also at the Lambs' when Willard, another popular actor, was the guest and, to the astonishment of the members, he at once commenced to attack them. He said he could not refrain from informing them that it was a great condescension on his part to accept their invitation that night, for he was not usually accustomed to associate with such a lot of artistic and literary refuse assembled to eat one of the worst dinners he had ever had the misfortune to partake.

A murmur of gratifying surprise buzzed round the room, and as the English actor's abuse became even more venomous the members arose with a great cheer in their delight at the "roasting" they had received from the man whom they had intended to roast.

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Guild took me to see Mr. Joseph Jefferson, who was then living with his pretty young wife and handsome little son in a pleasant flat near Madison Square. He had just returned from a long tour with his masterpiece, "Rip Van Winkle," and was now taking a holiday which he devoted chiefly to painting pictures from the many sketches he had made during his tour. He was an excellent painter and had a direct and vigorous touch with the brush. He told me that he had made his representation of "Rip" a study of years before he was satisfied with his performance and felt equal to presenting it to the public. But so wonderfully perfect was this gem of histrionic art that it delighted the playgoers of England and America again and again for nearly half a century, and there was a vast American audience ever ready to support him whenever he appeared in that character.

My friend Guild had a distant relative who had a charming estate outside Jersey City where we used to forgather for week-ends. Our host had been a galloper to General Grant during the war and was a smart, dapper little cavalry officer who, like many of his compatriots, had gravitated after the fighting into business. He had never been to England, and, like most untraveled Americans, thought us, as a nation, "no great shakes." He was fond of hunting, and asked me if we went in for it to any extent in that played-out little islet over which Queen Vic. reigned.

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"Oh yes!" I replied. " We do hunt, in a way, in England."

"Ah!" he replied; "I guess you want a few of us boys to put you through with hunting. I have a good mind to take my horses across the ferry and show you Britishers what we can do."

"Do," said I. "You may also pick up a wrinkle or two in horseflesh from us."

The next time I visited New York Guild and I went over to this man's house to spend a few days. My friend told me that our host had been to England, as he had promised, and I was therefore prepared for a change of front; but certainly not for one quite so remarkable. I noticed that the roads leading up to the house, which were mere tantalizing quagmires and ruts on my previous visit, were all now beautifully macadamized.

We had come to breakfast, and as we entered the room, our host smilingly advanced to meet us in an Oxford blazer of very pronounced hues. The first words he said to me were: "Guess I have to make some apology to you regarding my previous remarks about your lovely country. I almost blush to think that I made such a cussed fool of myself. Why, sir, it's about the only place worth living in. Gosh! And I was going to teach you fellows how to ride. Well, there, shake, and let's have a cocktail to kinder hide my confusion. My golly!"—and he heaved a deep sigh—"those elegant bartenders in the railway restaurants!"

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"You mean the barmaids?" I laughed.

"Yes; the gals in black, with snowy-white collars and cuffs. They are perfect peaches. How charmingly they serve you with a drink—those ghastly drinks with no ice. Guess those gals are the novelest things about your country. As you know, we have only men behind the bars in the States. *I miss those gals.*"

Our host, to show his appreciation of his English visit, as well as impress me, got into a smart scarlet hunting coat and white kid breeches and rode out alone for an hour to an imaginary pack of hounds, then he changed to knickers to take a walk with me before luncheon.

"See!" he said, as we passed over the new roads. "Got this notion from across the pond, but was obliged to tell my road makers, who are all Irish, that the system comes from Germany. Bless you, otherwise I should have no macadam!"

When we returned to the house he got into a morning suit, but changed later on to the orthodox frock coat for his wife's afternoon tea; then he shifted into a velvet lounge jacket before dinner; then he dressed, and eventually he wound up the evening in a sumptuous quilted-silk smoking jacket.

"Ah!" he sighed, as he threw himself into an easy chair. "You know how to exist in your beautiful country. Fancy thinking the people were a monotonous, played-out, stick-in-the-mud set. Why, it just

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makes one smile; it's a huge libel. *They are always changing.*"

At a dinner to Henry M. Stanley, at Delmonico's, after his return from his last expedition to Central Africa, I became acquainted with two well-known American personalities, Gen. Tecumseh Sherman, and Mr. Chauncey M. Depew. I sat next to the latter, a tall, fresh-colored, fine-figured man. He was clean shaven but for a pair of mutton-chop whiskers which, being nearly white, heightened the ruddy, healthy tone of his complexion. His features were sharp and clean-cut and his deep-seated, dark-blue eyes had a peculiar fire in them whenever he said a good thing—and he said many good things that night.

I watched him with considerable interest, for he was supposed to be one of America's greatest orators. But he did not appeal to me as much as Gen. Horace Porter, though both had that peculiar and entertaining trick of introducing incidents quite irrelevant to the subject of their discourse, which characterizes nearly all American oratory. For instance, this is a sample from a speech delivered by Horace Porter to the members of the Lotos Club who entertained him at dinner before he left New York for France, where he had just been appointed ambassador:

"You will probably have observed that I have a cold in my throat. But it is not a 'campaign cold.'

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It is like one that a man had whom I met in Arkansas; he had a sore throat, and when his wife asked how he got it, he said it was due to a sudden change. He had been eating flannel cakes and had suddenly changed to buckwheat.

"Probably the easiest thing for me to have given you tonight was one of my campaign speeches, a little altered so as to bring it up to date. That would have reminded you of the Scotsman who was riding on the railway from Perth to Inverness and was chewing his ticket in his mouth. A friend traveling with him said, 'You are very extravagant to be chewing up a ticket that costs twelve shillings and sixpence.' 'Nay, mon,' he replied, 'it is a limited ticket, and I am only sucking off the date.'"

General Sherman was exceedingly tall and slight, and though accredited with a character of considerable sternness, there was nothing in his face to show it. It was wreathed in smiles all through dinner till the band struck up, "Marching Through Georgia," probably the most popular and hackneyed, but most inspiring tune the world has ever known—even the Japanese have now adopted it for their most popular march. Then the smile left his face, and when the guests stood up and cheered he frowned. I suppose he was thinking of the ragged band of heroes who reached the sea after that weary march, and how sweet sounded the music of the ocean's roar.

When he rose to respond to the toast for the army, he laughingly referred to the newspaper reporters with

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his troops in Georgia, for the room was full of the fraternity taking notes. "They were a great trouble to me on the march, and I had much difficulty in keeping my plans from prematurely appearing in the papers. I am afraid I must have seemed a bit bearish to the 'intrepid correspondents,' and I remember that I threatened to have at least one of those zealous gentlemen shot. But," continued the general, still with a sweet smile on his face, "if I were campaigning with war correspondents of the present day I would have them all hanged."

In spite of this cruel threat, I had a most interesting chat with the veteran warrior, who knew and loved my dear friend Forbes, of whom he spoke in most eulogistic terms. I was able to tell him, what seemed to please him mightily, that during the Russo-Turkish war the great Russian General Skobeleff told me that the finest feat of arms of which he knew was Sherman's march to the sea.

I was glad to have met the general and to have had this chat, for within the month he was dead. His funeral was one of the most impressive functions at which I have been present. From all parts of the States comrades in arms donned their old uniforms and became soldiers once more to swell the ranks of the vast array of mourners that followed the great American soldier to his last bivouac.

I stumbled across Richard Mansfield one afternoon and he casually asked me if I was doing any-

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thing particular that evening. Finding that I was not, he invited me to dine at Delmonico's. I found, on arriving, that it was a dinner given to about twenty editors and *litterateurs* of New York; and Horace Porter was one of the guests.

It was a lavish and extravagant dinner, one of Delmonico's supreme efforts. Mansfield called it the "Wake of Richard." He had been playing "Richard III" to such indifferent houses in New York that he was compelled to close the theater and withdraw the play, and this dinner was to celebrate its death. The banquet was served in the old English style. The cooks, in pompous and solemn procession, brought in the meats, each guest in turn standing up and notifying his approval as the joints were taken to the carving board. Every guest had the menu framed in huge wreaths of white or red roses, symbolical of the houses of York and Lancaster, to place upon the bier of the dead play. Nevertheless, it was not by any means a somber feast, for what with the eccentric utterances of Horace Porter, the wit of Max O'Rell, and the best of Delmonico's cellar, we were gay with laughter. This magnificent feast, by which the plucky actor-manager brought his disastrous season to a close, was wired all over America, and he opened in Chicago to a splendid house, and fortune now smiled on him everywhere. This incident demonstrated to me the power of advertisement in the United States and the admiration of its citizens for resourcefulness and pluck.

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While I was in New York I became acquainted with America's greatest caricaturist, Thomas Nast. His remarkable war pictures in *Harper's Weekly* so stirred the patriotic feeling in the North during the Civil War that thousands of youths, aroused to enthusiasm by these drawings, were induced to join the colors, and possibly no one in those days did more in suppressing the rebellion with pen, tongue, or sword than did Nast with his pencil. His political cartoons influenced public opinion to so great an extent that with a few strokes of his pencil he could make or mar the career of a man.

I met the humorist, Bill Nye, and many others at Pond's office in the Everett House. Nye was a very lanky man, with a hairless, rather ascetic face, bald head, and a very solemn demeanor. He had a remarkable following, and mostly talked to crowded houses. His humor was slow, but sure. Sometimes one would have to wait for it. I remember one night he kept us fully five minutes before the laugh came. He was wading, with a dull, monotonous voice, through a rigmarole of a story about a young man whose father was supposed to have been lost at sea. One day he meets a man near his homestead, who turns out to be his long-lost father. The lad listens to the man's story of adventure and shipwreck. And the audience was listening, too, wondering when the joke would come to this rather weary yarn.

"Wal," continued the man, "when the ship

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foundered I struck out and swam. I saw that I was the only survivor; all my comrades were lost."

"Yes, father," said the son.

"For many hours I struggled with the cruel waters, till at last I almost gave up all hope, when suddenly—"

"Yes?" cried the expectant boy. And the audience was also by this time waiting anxiously for the point of the story.

"I touched something hard," he continued. "It was the United States."

It was during this, my third visit to New York, that I was interviewed by a very charming and clever representative of a Chicago paper who was good enough to arrange a meeting with the late Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox. It was at her apartment in New York that I first became acquainted with that most excellent of American innovations of the supper table, the chafing dish. We dined very early and sat over our coffee and cigars at the same table, chatting till late in the night. The company was excessively amusing and the conversation of the most entertaining character, which evidently assisted in digesting our dinner, for we were getting fairly hungry when about eleven o'clock the glittering silver dish, with a glowing spirit lamp beneath it, was placed upon the table and our brilliant hostess manipulated with her own hands a light supper. It was in the small hours of the morning that we left that festive board,

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and I think I have seldom spent a more delightful time at one sitting than at that house.

Some years afterward I met Mrs. Wilcox and her husband on board a Cunarder on their return journey from England, where they had been present at the solemn procession of the funeral cortège of our beloved Queen Victoria. The poetess had come to England for the first time for the purpose of describing the obsequies of the late queen for the New York *Journal*. This she did in her incomparable verse. But she did not like England, and London she declared was the most depressing city she had ever visited. She could never get warm. Our open fires were abominable to her. All the heat went up the chimneys, she assured me, and she spent most of her time in London on the hearth before the fire with the rug wrapped round her. She longed to get back to her cozy little bungalow in Connecticut.

To those who know how American houses are warmed during the winter, there seemed to be much truth in her indictment of the old-fashioned, inefficient means of heating our houses. It struck me, while listening to her experiences in London, that that exquisite poem of hers, full of warmth and passion, "The Birth of an Opal," and other verse of kindred nature, might never have been written if she had been compelled to live in such a chilling environment as the city of London.

My fair interviewer also enabled me to pay a visit to the great "shilling shocker" writer of

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America, that versatile genius and prolific writer and publisher of his own works, Mr. Archibald Clavering Gunter—a chubby, genial man with just a slight resemblance to the late George Augustus Sala in appearance, but as keen as a knife in business matters. He was a thorough tradesman who knew his market and turned out his goods regularly, so many per annum; and these in their tens of thousands were greedily snapped up by the American public. His books were generally written with an eye to making good melodramas, which he himself dramatized, superintending their production.

Mr. Gunter seemed to work more or less on the lines of the much maligned pork-packing houses of Chicago, where every bit of pig is used with the exception of the squeal. But the writer went further, and practically ran in the squeal, for he advertised his own wares. The result was that there was no wealthier author in the United States, or perhaps in the whole world, than Archibald Clavering Gunter. He had been chemist, mining expert, stockbroker, and civil engineer, and he had superintended the building of the Central Pacific Railway. But he found writing and publishing his own books and producing his own plays the most lucrative of all his many enterprises.

With the many vicissitudes through which he had passed it is not remarkable that he had such wonderful facility and accuracy of local color in

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his writings. The night I dined with him at his charming flat on Fourteenth Street I particularly inquired how he got that very accurate description in his admirable story, *Mr. Barnes of New York*, of a man watching the exploits of H. M. S. *Condor* before Fort Marabout during the bombardment of Alexandria.

Undoubtedly, it was from Mr. Cornish, the chief engineer on top of the waterworks of that city, who stuck to his post and defended the building from the Arab rabble. "I know it must have been," said I, "by the way you describe the position of the house, because I have been on that roof myself. From there it was possible to see the little *Condor* moving out toward her gigantic objective."

"Guess you are too kind," said the author, "in interpreting my meager copy in this delightful way. However, I do get the grip of things sometimes fairly well. I simply read the papers of those days of your Egyptian troubles and placed myself in imagination on the roof of one of the houses in Alexandria and tried to describe what I thought might be the case. That's all; but I am glad I hit it off so well."

During one of my visits to New York, I was invited to lecture to the cadets at West Point. There was only one other Englishman who had ever enjoyed this honor, and that was Sir Henry Irving; so I appreciated the invitation as a very great com-

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pliment to my profession, and I shall never forget the cordial reception which I received. I lectured in the chapel, which was draped for the occasion with American and British flags, and I have never addressed a more intelligent, enthusiastic audience than that delightful collection of the brightest of American youth.

On this visit to New York I ran across Henry M. Stanley again, this time at the old Everett House on the corner of Union Square, where he was staying while on his honeymoon. I remember well his look of wonder when I congratulated him upon his safe return from the Emin Pasha expedition.

Few people know that before he began to explore Central Africa Stanley was a war correspondent and acted in that capacity with Lord Napier at Magdala and with Viscount Wolseley in Ashantee. Wolseley, in his charming book, *The Story of a Soldier's Life*, writes of watching Stanley during the battle of Amoaful, and praises in the highest terms his conduct in that fight with the wild African tribesmen: "A thoroughly good man; no noise, no danger ruffled his nerve, and he looked as cool and as self-possessed as if he had been at target practice. Time after time, as I turned in his direction, I saw him go down to a kneeling position to steady his rifle as he plied the most daring of the enemy with a never-failing aim. It is nearly thirty years ago, and I can still see before me the close-shut lips and determined expression of his manly face, which,

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when he looked in my direction, told plainly I had near me an Englishman in plain clothes whom no danger could appall. Had I felt inclined to run away, the cool, firm, unflinching manliness of that face would have given me fresh courage."

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Chapter XI

IN TOUCH WITH ROYALTY

At Mar Lodge—I am introduced to a learned Duke, Prince Leopold—A chat with the Prince of Wales, the late Edward VII—I sketch him in Highland costume—I don one of his bonnets—A royal deerstalk—A few of Lord Fife's guests—I am invited by the Prince to stay at Abergeldie Castle—I meet the Princess, the present Queen Mother—Her charm and beauty—Queen Victoria and her daughters at a play in the coach house of the castle—A day in the Queen's busy life on Dee-side—An irascible Field Marshal of the old school.

DURING my wanderings around the globe in the capacity of special artist for various journals, I have been the guest of emperors, kings, viceroys, and princes, not to mention "King Lackland," of the Tziganes, whose realm is the open road. These dignitaries, together with the greatest soldiers, sailors, statesmen, and diplomats, have all found places in my sketch books.

In these days of democracies and of Bolshevism, arising—as my friend, Baron Schelking, has it—from the suicide of monarchies, which, in turn, has resulted from the greed and ambition of most royal houses, it may be interesting to catch a glimpse of the private life of one regal family that is still loved,

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honored, and trusted by the nation which is in spirit the greatest republic in the world.

After a campaign I would very often join my friend and confrère, Archibald Forbes, in the Highlands of Scotland for fishing and shooting. Shortly after my first visit to the United States in the early '80's, I was shooting with him on Dee-side when, at the famous Braemar Highland gathering, I met the chief of the clan McDuff, the late Duke (then Earl) of Fife, who invited me to join his house party at Mar Lodge. The old lodge, an odd-cornered, quaint building, mostly of wood, was picturesquely situated overlooking a stretch of the river Dee. The main building was partly bungalow and partly a series of chalets clinging to the side of a steep, wooded hill called the Eagle's Craig. The whole had grown from a simple keeper's lodge and from time to time had been added to by the late Countess of Fife, till it had become quite a village nestling round a charming little chapel, the rare stained-glass window of which Lord Fife had dedicated to the memory of the Countess, his mother.

The lodge and buildings were capable of holding over a hundred retainers and visitors, and on the occasion of the present visitor of royalty a large marquee was erected in the open to serve as a ballroom. It was a characteristic house party the earl had gathered together to meet his Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales (the late King Edward VII). The Duke of Albany, the Marquis of Hartington,

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and Lord Charles Beresford were among the men; and the Duchess of Manchester, Lady Charles Beresford, the Countess of Lonsdale, and Mrs. Standish were of the ladies of the party.

The arrival of the heir to the British throne at Mar Lodge was devoid of any unusual demonstration on the part of the host or his other guests. The Prince simply drove up in his dogcart and his baggage was sent on by coach. In fact, few of us assembled at the lodge were aware of his arrival until he turned up at dinner.

The Prince cordially disliked any show of special attention when once he had broken loose from the conventional life of London and the Court. On being introduced to him, if you should address him as your Royal Highness more than once, it was to him almost a personal affront. After the first meeting it was usual to address him as one man to another—Yes, or No, sir. It was the same with the Princess of Wales; she always responded to *Madame*, and disliked hearing the obsequious title your Royal Highness more than once.

Prince Leopold, on the other hand, was very particular about his titles. The night of the arrival of the Prince of Wales there was a ball given in the marquee erected in the grounds of the lodge. I was seated chatting with the Duchess of Manchester, who was watching the dancers, especially the Prince of Wales, who looked very handsome in the Stuart tartan he affected for evening dress, when a very

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fair, blue-eyed young man approached us and the Duchess immediately introduced me and said, "Prince Leopold, this is Mr. Villiers." He drew himself up and with some hauteur replied, "Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, if you please, Duchess." She had to say her lines!

But the Duke was a delightful personage, a student of literature and art—in fact, he was supposed to be the bookworm of the family. My sleeping room was next to his and a balcony in front, where we used to take our tubs of a morning, was common to both of us. He was probably the most amiable of all the princes and when he died two years later he was deeply mourned.

The entire time that the Prince of Wales was with us the men were fishing or deerstalking all day. The ladies would fish in the mornings and meet the stalkers at some bothy up in the hills and give them tea. After dinner there was a gathering of a hundred gillies, the earl's retainers, who marched down from the hills to the screel of the pipes, bearing the slain stags, which were placed in rows in the courtyard of the lodge. A huge bonfire was built in the center of the quadrangle. The gillies, with their pine torches steeped in pitch set aflare from the flames, stood at attention. The fitful, uncertain light made a scene that was weirdly picturesque.

By this time the diners had toasted the Prince in good old Highland fashion, as in the days of the Charleses, the pipers had screeled their hardest as they

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stalked round the festive board and were now marking time under the veranda. This was the signal for the earl and his visitors to file out into the quadrangle, when the pipes burst out again in a lively reel.

The Prince of Wales, the Earl of Fife, and two other guests responsible for the death of the beasts, now seized flaring torches from the hands of the nearest gillies and took turns in dancing round the dead stags. Then, with a wild yell and to an ear-splitting screech from the pipes, all the guests, including myself, headed by the Prince, took a wild leap through the bonfire. I had seen much fire and smoke of a different and more risky nature, but at that huge mass of fire and flame I felt a little nervous. However, like the rest, I had to face the ordeal, and I made a good long running leap and in a second was safely on the other side of the fiery wall without even scorching my mustache. After this quaint ceremony the game was carried to the larder and the gillies marched slowly back to their quarters headed by their pipes, whose efforts became real music as they droned and died away in the distance. Then a dreamy waltz—I remember it well, "Dolores"—floated out from the hall, played by the earl's string band. The guests hurriedly cleared the furniture, and an impromptu dance commenced, which kept up into the small hours.

A source of some amusement was an empty log basket of large dimensions standing by the hearth. Whenever the Prince or the earl passed within reach,

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Lord Charles Beresford, who was always up to some lively prank, would try to double them up in the basket. Between dances he would trot out an invalid chair, which he had discovered in a corner of the room, and wheel the lady who was acclaimed the beauty of the dance—on this occasion Countess Lonsdale—in triumph around the hall. These evenings were always full of fun and frolic owing to the lively pranks of Beresford. Before taking up our candles, most of the men would retire to the smoke room for the last "Doch an' Doris" and then all to bed.

During dessert on the first night of my visit to the lodge, the Prince sent for me to be seated by him. He said:

"I think I have seen you before, Mr. Villiers; your face is quite familiar to me."

His marvelous memory for faces was, I knew, proverbial. He had met me before at the gate leading into the paddock at Goodwood where we both were stuck for a while. I am afraid I treated him like any ordinary person and did not immediately give way, and I remembered his good-natured stare at my tardy recognition and my confusion at my seeming discourtesy. I was therefore much relieved when he continued:

"Ah yes, of course; I have seen a portrait of you taken with Mr. Archibald Forbes, in a lady's house in London."

The Prince was much interested in certain points

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in the Russo-Turkish War, which I, as an eye-witness of the campaign, was able to give him. He was most eulogistic of the brilliant services Col. Valentine Baker had rendered the Turks, regretting the loss to the British army of such an excellent cavalry leader.

Major (afterward Sir C.) Teesdale, one of his Royal Highness's equerries, was seated at one end of the table, and during the evening the Prince toasted for him, for it was the anniversary of his gaining that much-coveted decoration, the Victoria Cross, and the Prince had remembered it; he always seemed to remember everything that was pleasant and agreeable.

The following morning Lord Fife asked me to join his royal guest and himself in a deer stalk. I came down to the hall prepared to start when the Prince caught sight of my cap, which I thought was a very becoming pattern, though a bit breezy.

"I am afraid that bonnet won't do, Mr. Villiers," said the Prince. "It's exceedingly picturesque, but I am afraid you would startle all the deer in Scotland with it."

"I have no other, sir!" I replied.

"Never mind," he laughed on seeing me a little mortified, "I will lend you one of mine."

Presently I was rigged up with a royal cap of a proper tone to melt in with the rocks and heather. That cap was an excellent fit and I kept it all the time I was a guest at the lodge. Many years after

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this incident, when our beloved Prince, as Edward VII, had passed away, I was looking at some silk hats at "Ye Old Hatterie"—Mr. Heath's shop in Oxford Street—when a salesman said: "I have just the thing for you. How will this suit?" and he placed on my head a topper of wonderful lines and remarkable gloss with a golden star in its cream-silk lining. It was a perfect fit. "I have another one like it," he said. "You had better take the two. We shall never make hats quite like these again, for they were kept in stock for His Majesty King Edward."

"Send them on to the club. I know the fit quite well," said I.

I shall never forget that delightful tramp over the hills, dodging behind rocks and crawling over the crisp, blooming heather when the gillies, scouting in front, made any significant sign. The Prince was never too absorbed with the sport to admire the beauty of the surroundings when the wavering mists unfolded some pocket of a valley with its dew-laden greenery and luminous, pearly burns. These scenes brought the conversation round to the art of reproducing them on canvas. With masterpieces of landscapes and figures, with the great battle pictures of De Neuville, the smaller studies of Détaille, and vigorous work of Regnault, the Prince seemed equally familiar. In another moment he was unwittingly making a picture himself, looking like a Highlander stalking Afridis

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up in the hills of Afghanistan—a subject which I had often sketched during the Afghan war.

From rock to rock he dodged till he settled down behind some friendly boulder, when he took steady aim. It was curious how breathless with anxiety we felt before the first trigger was pulled and one of a drive of gray, wraithlike figures, stealing in Indian file through the dapple purple mist, fell to his gun. We hurried up to the struggling stag trying to regain its footing, and while we hung on to its antlers the Prince ended its sufferings by giving the *coup de grace* with his dagger.

So for hours the stalk went on till we arrived on a mount ankle deep in heather, out of which, in a slight depression, a spring of sparkling water bubbled. Here we sat down and my fellow stalkers produced their packages of sandwiches and commenced eating, filling their hunting cups from the spring.

"Where is your lunch?" asked the Prince.

"In changing my cap I forgot my rations, sir."

"That's too bad," he replied. "Take some of mine."

We sat chatting and eating and admiring the wonderful confusion of rocks, crags, hills, and distant dales through which rilled burns and waterfalls. I understood from the earl that the country as far as we could see belonged to him, and I thought surely there could be no fairer domain in all Scotland.

While we were smoking our cigarettes the Prince said:

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"My dear Fife, I am going to entertain my mother with a play. She has not seen one since the death of my father upward of twenty years ago, and if I can get her to come I think the change will do her good."

Fife suggested that he approach Mr. Gus Harris, the manager of Drury Lane Theater, but the Prince was keen on another manager, Mr. Edgar Bruce, who had just produced a play that had taken London by storm, called "The Colonel," and that comedy was decided on before the stalk recommenced.

Late in the afternoon we arrived, after the Prince had killed a few stags, at a bothy where the ladies of the party served tea. The dead stags were collected and sent down to the base of the hills slung across sturdy little ponies, and we went back to the lodge in the house drags.

The late Marquis of Hartington, who eventually became the Duke of Devonshire, was one of the most interesting of the house-party. He was a tall, rather gaunt type of man. His visage was long and devoid of any kind of brightness—lacking even the sparkle of the eye which sometimes will make a homely face radiant—yet one always felt that behind that taciturn mask there was tremendous power. This was vividly demonstrated one morning at breakfast. That meal was always a movable feast at the lodge. I was generally down early and so was Hartington. I took great interest

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in the man, for at this time he was Secretary of State for India and there was much trouble with the tribes on the northwestern frontier.

While he was taking his first cup of coffee, a messenger arrived from London with the Indian mail which was at once placed upon the table in front of him in the shape of two leather bags.

He immediately got up and with his official key opened the first bag. This was a most interesting procedure to me. "Now," thought I, "he will snatch up these important dispatches and engross himself in their perusal." But nothing in the first bag seemed to appeal to him; he then opened the second. Official envelopes poured onto the table. "Now, surely," I thought, "he will stick his glass in his eye and probably forget his breakfast in his anxiety to read these Indian letters." Not a bit of it; to my surprise, he was still hunting in that official bag till at last something ruddy made its appearance. He seemed to give a sigh of relief as he seized it and returned to his breakfast, unfolding the *Sporting Times* and settling down to read the *Pink Un.*

Lord Rowton, better known as Sir Montague Corry, was also a guest at the lodge. We became quite good friends, and after dinner we would chat a good deal about our great Prime Minister, Lord Beaconsfield, who, as Mr. Benjamin Disraeli, gave Rowton his first step on "the rung of the ladder."

Rowton was lean and lithe and had pronounced

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Jewish features with keen, dark, protruding eyes; yet he had, I believe, no Jewish blood in his veins. One night, over our coffee, he told me how he first came across his chief. It was at a lady's house in London, where he had hastily improvised some Christy minstrels for the amusement of her guests and was himself playing a corner man. Disraeli, sauntering in from one of the card-rooms, had overheard his tomfoolery and was evidently amused, for after Corry had washed his face and joined the party the Premier came up to him and asked:

"Are you not the young man who made me laugh just now?"

"Glad to have amused you, sir," returned Corry.

"I thought it was very bright and clever," answered the great statesman. "Come and see me. I should like to meet you again."

"I thought but little of this invitation at the moment," Lord Rowton told me. "But some time after this meeting I wanted employment, and I decided to call on the great man and see if he would befriend me. He received me kindly, but told me that he could offer me nothing at the time. Many months passed by and I concluded that I had completely passed out of his memory, when one morning I got a note asking me to call. When I saw him I found the old man had not forgotten me, but had been waiting all this time for the opportunity to offer me a secretaryship."

One night in the cool of the veranda of the lodge,

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Rowton related to me the final lap of the "peace with honor" incident.

"You know, Villiers," said he, "I was really the indirect cause of that event coming off. Lord Beaconsfield was not quite accustomed to the wily diplomatic maneuvers of the great German Chancellor. During the Peace Congress at Berlin in '78, after the Russo-Turkish War, which lingered on for days and days without any definite settlement, 'Dizzy' got so disgusted that he told Bismarck that if certain points were not conceded Great Britain at once he would break up the conference and quit. Of course the German Chancellor thought this was all diplomatic bluff and evidently winked his other eye. I could see that a threat of this kind by my chief was useless, so I thought things over and, without letting him know, wired to the railway officials at Dover to send a Channel steamer to meet a special train at Calais from the Franco-German frontier on a certain date.

"This settled the matter, for, of course, every telegram sent home by the delegates was read by Bismarck, and mine didn't puzzle his brain much, for it was *not* in cipher. He evidently came to the conclusion that my chief meant business, and therefore he climbed down to meet our views, and we came back to London with flying colors. When I told 'Dizzy' of my ruse later on, he recognized that I had certainly done the trick."

The next evening, just before dinner, one of

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the guests—a well-known Scottish laird who, like Beresford, was keen on practical jokes—said to me:

"Villiers, I am going to make the Prince angry with me to-night. Now you watch."

"I think you will have a difficult job, for he seems to me to be the most amiable of mortals. I doubt if you will disturb him much."

"Well, you just watch," was his only reply.

When dinner was announced the Prince, as usual, was the first to enter the dining room and take his chair. He then urbanely smiled on us all as we seated ourselves.

A bright conversation buzzed round the room, and H. R. H. was exceedingly cheerful. I keenly watched my friend, who was calmly seated, almost opposite him, eating his soup. I looked at the Prince; he was still smiling. Presently he happened to glance in my friend's direction, his smile at once disappeared, his face slightly flushed and became very stern. Certainly the Prince was somewhat annoyed.

My friend was still at his soup and seemed to be doing nothing out of the ordinary, but whenever the conversation lagged the Prince looked in his direction and frowned. "How on earth has he soured him?" I wondered. When we gathered later on in the smoking-room my friend came up to me and said:

"Did you notice him?"

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"Of course I did, but how did you manage it? He was certainly annoyed."

"Now just look me all over. Don't you see?"

"No, nothing of an unusual character, unless," I hesitated, "you have overcurled your mustache."

"Oh rot!" he laughed. "It was my tie."

"Well, what about your cravat? It's not even awry."

"No, but it's the color that fixed him; it's not a white one. The Prince hates black, and it's an unwritten law in dining with him to wear only white."

While the Prince was staying with the Earl of Fife, the Princess of Wales (now the Queen Mother) came over from Abergeldie Castle, the Prince's residence in the Highlands, to a picnic with the earl's party at a picturesque spot on the River Dee. I shall never forget the thrill of enthusiasm I felt at her gentle charm of manner and at her beauty, for she was the original of the hundreds of thousands of portraits that with those of her Majesty Queen Victoria were bedecking nearly every homestead throughout the British Empire, and here I was chatting with her about my campaigns—a conversation she had kindly started to put me quite at my ease.

I found that she had a very accurate knowledge of all the principal dramatic incidents of the then recent Afghan and Russo-Turkish wars. She, with the Duchess of Manchester and her daughter-in-law, Lady Mandeville, were the life of the party.

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The women fished for trout while the men built a fire to boil the kettles; then the women cut bread and butter and improvised spits from the twigs on which they toasted the bread, spread table-cloths over the grass, brought out the cups and saucers and prepared tea. The fish, fresh from the river, were cooked at the end of a toasting-fork by the Prince of Wales in as primitive a manner as that practiced by the chefs of *The Swiss Family Robinson*. All of our party seemed to enjoy the sylvan banquet as much as the hungry members of that famous vagabond family did their rough-and-ready meals, and like them, but with more enjoyment, the aftermath of washing up the dishes. That function was performed with the greatest fun and delight by all members of the party while the stately footmen took their ease at a respectful distance, not daring to approach nearer even to open a sardine tin or to throw a fresh log on the camp-fire. They were merely held in reserve to carry the baskets, all packed and strapped by members of the party, to the drags waiting for them on the main road.

As the Prince was about to leave the lodge to return to his Highland residence I asked him if he would be good enough one morning to give me a sitting, as I wanted to introduce him in a picture of a hunt dance. He agreed at once. I told him I should only be about twenty minutes, but when that time was up I found my work but half done.

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With considerable fear of trespassing further on his good nature, I had to tell him.

"Now, Mr. Villiers," he said, "don't you spoil your sketch for the question of a few minutes. Take another twenty if you like."

I thought this very good of him, for I knew his day was always mapped out and he was generally very particular about keeping time in his appointments.

The next morning he left the lodge. We all stood under the veranda to wish him Godspeed. There was quite a little crowd shaking hands with him. As I stood at the back, he happened to pass me by. When he drove out of the gates in his dog-cart some of us hurried by a short cut down to a curve in the road to wave our hats to him. On passing us he saw me, and, evidently, remembering that he had missed me before cried out: "Good-by, Mr. Villiers. Come and see me soon at Abergeldie." And to my great delight the next day I received an invitation to go to stay with him and the Princess of Wales at their castle on Dee-side.

On arriving at Abergeldie one had to cross the river Dee from the main Balleter road in a basket-cradle worked by ropes and pulleys. There is now a bridge spanning the river, but in those days every one visiting the castle arrived at its gates by this primitive method.

An old feudal tower stood on the left of the

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building, which was no more than a cottage, for the main hall was used for dining, breakfast, and reception-room all in one. There was a small drawing-room above this where the guests, who were never very many at a time, were marshaled before going in to dinner below. The Prince and his family lived in the cottage and the guests had rooms in the medieval tower.

The first night I was waiting in the little drawing-room upstairs for the signal for dinner. Another guest had just sat down on the sofa—an elderly man with a remarkably powerful face and wonderful eyes which seemed as if they would shine like a tiger's in the dark. The Prince now came in and, seeing we had not become acquainted, took me up to him and, with a laugh, said:

"Lord Napier, this young man has seen more fighting than you have; I want you to know him, Mr. Villiers, the war artist."

The old field marshal looked at me at first with a slight frown, then his eyes lit up his rugged old face and he smiled, and we soon became good friends. I had always worshiped him since I was a lad of seventeen, when he became one of my heroes after the storming of Magdala and the capture of the Ethiopian King Theodore. He told me that he remembered two colleagues of mine, Mr. William Simpson, and the explorer, Henry M. Stanley, who were with him in the capacity of war correspondents during his command of the Abyssinian campaign.

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It was a small party at dinner—the Prince, his equerry, Miss Knollys, the Princess of Wales, Lord Napier, and myself. The conversation during dinner was about the coming theatrical show which the Queen had promised to attend. The Prince had thrown his whole heart and soul into the work of fixing the coach-house into a theater and arranging for the accommodation of the play-actors and the extra number of guests. There was great excitement for days over the different propositions to be solved in order to cope successfully with the influx of visitors for miles around Dee-side. At last the big night arrived. The little theater was charmingly arranged; a large marquee was erected in the grounds for Mr. Bruce and his company.

The weather was perfect. At nine o'clock Mr. John Brown, the Queen's factotum, arrived, with Her Majesty, who had driven over from Balmoral with the Princesses Louise and Beatrice. The Prince received his mother at the door of the hall. Mr. Bruce presented her and her daughters with bouquets, and her maids of honor followed her upstairs to the little drawing-room which was arranged for her special use.

The theater was packed with the lairds and gentry dwelling for miles around. Her Majesty was seated in a chair in the center of the front row. On her left was the Princess of Wales and on her right were her daughters. I was seated behind her and a little to the right, and I noticed how amused

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she seemed to be with the play, much to the satisfaction of the royal family, who were delighted at her evident enjoyment. In fact, she laughed so much at the lively antics of an Italian waiter in one of the acts that she shook her widow's weeds a little awry, which kept the Princess of Wales and the Princess Beatrice quite busy, unbeknown to her, in keeping her cap and veil straight. The whole show was a tremendous success, and after the play we returned to the hall for refreshments, Her Majesty taking hers alone in the room above.

Before sitting down to supper, the Prince, with his equerry and myself, visited the company of players in their marquee to see that they lacked nothing for their comfort. They were making very merry over their repast and had evidently enjoyed themselves during the play as much as we had.

I took in to supper the Queen's Maid of Honor, who had just left her Majesty upstairs. She was very pretty and vivacious, and was with the rest of the party having a good time when presently she turned to me and inquired the hour.

"Oh, don't tell her, Mr. Villiers," said the Prince. "She must not go yet."

"But, she replied, "the Queen will be leaving soon and I must attend her."

"Oh, never mind," continued H. R. H., "I will see my mother about it. Don't disturb yourself."

But she stood up to go, and added, "I know Her Majesty so well; she will be very annoyed if I

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don't turn up in time." And she skipped out of the hall.

We sat up rather late that night in the smoke-room, for we were all exceedingly happy at the success of the great event and to think that the Queen had broken her reserve and had attended the play. My room was one of those in the old tower. I lit my candle and climbed up the spiral stone stair, when a sudden gust of wind swept through one of the arrow slits of the wall and blew out my candle. I thought I would relight it when I reached my room, and continued on in the dark. I had left my door ajar, so I thought I could easily recognize it, however black the night. I was wearing rather a tight collar and was longing to relieve myself of it. On pushing open the door I tore off my collar and tie and threw them onto the bed. A low growl came from that direction and a gruff voice cried: "It's that cursed cat again. Damn her!" I at once rushed out of the room—mine was on the next story and this was the room of the great field marshal.

Before I left Abergeldie, Queen Victoria sent for my sketch-book. She always took a lively interest in the many great wars during her reign and expected my paper to forward her the rough sketches sent home by me from the front. In those days many were simply scraps and notes with directions for the artist who was to finish them up, for they had to be redrawn on wooden blocks and afterward

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engraved before they could be reproduced. Many painters now risen to fame, like Sir Luke Fildes, Sir Hubert von Herkomer, and H. Woods, R.A., have embellished my work for the *Graphic* in this way and I am proud to say that the great French military artist, Alfonse de Neuville, painted his famous picture of Tel-el-Kebir from my original sketches.

Sometimes on returning my portfolio the Queen would send me a charming little note through her secretary, or a message by one of her equerries. One can hardly realize the delight I felt in the 'seventies and 'eighties—when correspondents had a free rein and could go everywhere—to be riding back from some great battle to the base knowing that I had in my valise something that would thrill all Europe from the gamin in the street to the highest in the land.

There is a common fallacy, especially in democratic countries, that royalty lives simply to have a good time at the expense of the proletariat. This in past ages with the Stuarts and the Bourbons, for instance, might have been the case. But things are different now, at least with British crowned heads. No woman in the world has ever worked harder than the late Queen Victoria; and no man in the universe ever worked more strenuously for his livelihood than did the late King Edward, both as Prince of Wales and as King of England. They both had a strong sense of duty and never spared

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themselves in serving the state and upholding the honor and glory of the Empire. And even in ordinary functions of the Court, monotonous and irksome as they might be, they always played the game.

As an instance of this remarkable devotion to duty, I recall a wedding at the chapel royal in Windsor Castle at which I was present. The German Emperor, with the Kaiserin, and many foreign princes who had arrived from the Continent specially to attend the nuptials, had already marched to their respective places in the chapel. Then there was a slight wait. I had seen the Queen after her afternoon drive on the day before carried by her Indian servants from the carriage up the palace steps, evidently crippled with pain, and I thought the pause in the proceeding was owing to her decision not to attend. But in this I was mistaken, for she turned up just in time for the ceremony and passed down the aisle to the altar without assistance, bowing to her regal guests, the most imperial and stately figure of them all, when most women in those distressing circumstances would have pleaded sickness, remained in bed, and let the whole function "go hang"!

The Queen's life in the Highlands was always a busy one. At eight o'clock every morning one of the castle pipers played a lively tune on the bagpipes outside her bedroom window at Balmoral to wake her up. After breakfast there was nearly

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always office work to do, signing papers and consulting her Minister-in-Waiting. Then came a walk through the grounds or out into the highroad with the Princess Beatrice, and, after luncheon, private letters to write and a drive in the direction of Ballater or to the Lynn of Dee, calling by the way on some bedridden or sick old woman or passing the time of day with the poor folk.

Occasionally the Princess Beatrice would assist the daughter of the cottage to make tea, when some tasty buns, cakes, or jellies were produced from the royal carriage for the old people and the Queen would join in a cup of tea. Her visits to her poor neighbors were always a delight to her, and she was much annoyed if inquisitive visitors to Dee-side waylaid her carriage for a peep at her on these drives abroad.

It was an understood thing that people who possessed shooting lodges on Dee-side near the royal castle should discriminate as to their tenants. I remember meeting my friend, the then owner of Invercauld, who wanted to let his house, for it was rather too large for his wife and child, containing, so the legend goes, some sixty bedrooms. His agent in Aberdeen, he told me, had been approached by a prospective tenant who desired to rent it for the season. Finding that this person hailed from South Africa and was one of the *nouveaux riches* from the mines, the owner told his factor to ask a very high figure for the purpose of frightening the

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fellow off. However, a check for the amount in advance arrived by the next post.

But the new tenant never made him anxious. He kept in his grounds for weeks, never showing himself or his family on the highroad when the Queen was likely to pass by. Her Majesty at last began to inquire about her new neighbor, and, recognizing the consideration he showed for her privacy, she invited him and his wife to tea at Balmoral, and she evidently found them quite charming, for the *entente cordiale* continued to the end of the tenancy, much to the relief of the perturbed owner of Invercauld.

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Chapter XII

THE LITTLE CLOUD IN THE NEAR EAST

The Alexandrian riots—Arabi Pasha—The British fleet arrives—The "Swell of the Ocean"—Lord Charles Beresford—I am his guest on board H. M. S. "Condor"—I am somewhat responsible for the bombardment of the forts—The "Condor" is under fire and acquits herself well—The water picnic—"Well done, Charley!"—The famous gunboat puts to sea—The cable ship—A journalistic triumph—The burning harem.

MY staying with the Prince of Wales in the Highlands brought me a sheaf of social engagements and for a year I enjoyed the hospitality of a number of delightful people and took a complete rest from the ardous duties of the war-artist. But the lure of campaigning was too strong upon me to dally any longer with the delights of social amenities and the ease and comfort of studio life. Therefore in June of the following year I accepted a commission from the *Graphic* to go to Egypt. Quite suddenly a little cloud had appeared on the Near-Eastern horizon. An attack had been made by a fanatical Alexandrian mob upon Europeans living in that city, and trouble was brewing in the vicinity of England's highway to India,

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the Suez Canal. So I took the next steamer to the land of the Pharaohs.

When I landed in Alexandria, Arabi Pasha, the Egyptian patriot and Commander-in-Chief of the Khedivial army, had just entered the town with a strong force of infantry to restore order and protect the lives and property of Europeans after the attack upon them by the natives which occurred on the 11th of June. Europeans, however, had very little confidence in Arabi and were leaving the port daily with their goods and chattels to seek safety on board the ships in the harbor. The troops whom Arabi commanded were a slipshod, musket-nursing set, who lacked the discipline and smartness of their British-officered brethren of to-day. In those days a fellaheen soldier, calmly seated on a chair borrowed from an adjacent shop, sewing buttons on his uniform while on sentry-go, or standing bootless in his sentry-box to keep his feet cool, was a common sight in the streets of Alexandria.

Yet, withal, he was cleanly in attire, sparkling with metal buttons on his dazzling white tunic, and picturesque in color by virtue of his deep red tarboosh and the olive brown of his countenance. In those days sewing buttons on his tunic was about the only martial accomplishment in which the Egyptian soldier excelled. Still, the populace feared him, which was the most important consideration in the present instance.

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The British fleet had by now arrived in Egyptian waters, so I called to pay my respects on the British Admiral, Sir Beauchamp Seymour (afterward Lord Alcester), on his flagship. I could not quite understand the sobriquet given by the navy, "The Swell of the Ocean." It was certainly not by virtue of his attire, because I found him on the quarter-deck in his shirt sleeves, perspiring under his solar topee. The weather was exceedingly hot and he was continually lifting his helmet and mopping his forehead with a voluminous colored kerchief.

After pleasantly greeting me, he said, "Your colleague, Mr. Cameron, is also on one of my ships and is coming to dine with me this evening; will you join us?"

I replied that I would do so with pleasure.

There was a hearty bluffness about the Admiral that was irresistible. He was rather thickset, of medium height, and he had a face that reminded one of the skipper in Millais' famous picture "The North-West Passage"—strong and genial, but one that could quickly turn into a sternness most imposing and emphatic. It changed in this way while I was talking to him. His flag-lieutenant, now Admiral of the Fleet Sir Hedworth Meux, saluted and reported the French Admiral coming aboard. The genial light died out of Seymour's keen gray eyes and as they flashed anger he growled, "What the devil does he want with me now?"

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"He's at the gangway. Will you receive him in your coat, sir?" asked Lambton.

"Why, hang it, yes!" replied the Admiral, who had completely forgotten his negligèe attire. In another moment he was wrestling with his dress-jacket and epaulettes and sword. He had just time to straighten himself out and twist his face into an affable smile before the dapper little French officer approached him.

The last time I saw the Admiral in Egypt was when he transferred his flag to the *Invincible* during the bombardment of the forts, because of her light draught, so that he could anchor before Fort Mex and slog away at it with her broadsides.

When I returned to the shore things were becoming excessively uncomfortable in the town. The continued flight of the Europeans made the Arabs very insolent to those who remained behind and the hotel accommodation suffered from lack of service and scantiness of food. I was therefore glad when the commander of H. M. gunboat *Condor*, whom I had met at Mar Lodge the previous year, asked me to take potluck on board his ship, which had come in with the rest of the fleet and was now anchored in the harbor, suggesting in his cheery way that it might be safer and even more comfortable there than in quarters in the town. He was right, for his cabin was daintily furnished and had the appearance of a cozy drawing-room. At night the cabin was transformed by means of two swaying

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cots hitched to the ceiling, into a sleeping chamber; and a real silver bath was introduced ready for our ablutions in the morning. In addition to all of this there was a well stocked wine-locker.

The *Condor*, by reason of her shallow draught, was moored in the inner harbor close in-shore under the shadow of the Ras-el-tin palace, the summer residence of the Khedive. There were many stories afloat regarding this close proximity of Beresford's gunboat to the palace. One was that she was told off to assist the ladies of the Khedivial harem to escape if Arabi, the rebel, should suddenly show his teeth and surround the palace.

If this story were true, there was no man in the service fitter to do this delicate work than Beresford, for his gallantry to all ladies in distress was proverbial. As the naval officer deputed to look after the refugees from the city on board the numerous tramp steamers in the harbor, he had by his urbanity and gentleness gained the admiration and confidence of the women-kind of all the various nationalities seeking the protection of the British fleet. Many a scheme was suggested by those on board the *Condor* for the rescue of the Khedive's wife and children if things came to a crisis—and this might happen at any moment, for Arabi and his followers were becoming very truculent.

About two hundred yards from the palace, at the beginning of the narrow isthmus, in which stands the lighthouse of Ras-el-tin, was apparently

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a gigantic mushroom with its white top glistening in the strong glare of the sun. The commander of the *Condor* always had a decidedly suspicious regard for this object. It was the cover to the only dangerous piece of ordnance that Arabi might possess if a rupture with the British fleet took place, for it concealed a breech-loading, quick-firing gun *en barbette*, which could be elevated or depressed and was capable of delivering from its exalted perch a plunging fire upon the decks or the anchored ships.

Beresford provided, however, for any trouble that might arise from this battery by converting the shoreward side of the *Condor* into a temporary ironclad. This he accomplished by dressing her in chain-armor. Every scrap of spare iron and chain found on board was hung over her bulwarks, giving her quite a list to starboard. Day and night a watchful glass was continually being turned toward the monster mushroom; but the gun below was never seen. Indeed, we found out afterward that its elevating gear was out of order; so it was never able to test out the *Condor's* improvised coat of mail.

After a hard day's work in the stuffy streets of Alexandria, I used to look forward to Charley Beresford's breezy hospitality at night—the dinner on deck under the soft light of an Egyptian moon, with the table graced with all the artistic odds and ends which embellish the tables of well-appointed

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homes. We would enjoy our evening meal as usual, eating our fish before our meat, when to-morrow at the same hour we might ourselves be meat for the fishes, for each dawn brought us nearer to a rupture that would set the ships blazing at the forts—and those white stone walls would return the compliment with interest from their gaping embrasures. This event came to pass rather sooner than we expected and I happened to be the indirect cause of precipitating matters. I had landed one morning at the *marina*, when I met a smart, enterprising Scotchman, a storekeeper of Alexandria, who supplied the British fleet with fresh beef and coal. He was full of some important news which he presently imparted to me. Arabi Pasha had defied the ultimatum sent in by the British Admiral by mounting additional guns in the forts. This was important information, for Sir Beauchamp Seymour had intimated to the Egyptians that if any guns were mounted after a certain date he would regard the act as a *casus belli*, and the British ships would immediately resort to bombardment.

"What are your proofs that Arabi has defied the Admiral?" I inquired.

"You will soon have them," said he. "If you drive at once to my brother's house overlooking the old harbor, you will see from the balcony what the Arab gunners have been doing during the night."

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I hurried to the address given me, and with the assistance of a telescope I sketched the cannon that had been dragged into position under cover of darkness and had been deserted by the gunners as soon as daylight disclosed their movements. I returned to the *marina* and rowed out to the *Condor*, whose commander promptly carried the important tidings to the Admiral. A smart young officer disguised himself as an Arab boatman and volunteered to corroborate my information. To test his disguise he attempted to board the American warship, but the make-up was so perfect that the Yankees turned the deck hose on him. Luckily he was in full retreat down the side of the vessel when this happened. He then rowed ashore and was able to prove the treachery of Arabi. Then the order was given for the British ships to clear for action.

Never shall I forget the last meal on board the *Condor* before the fighting commenced. The commander had invited the captains of the French, German, and American ships to dinner, and a right jovial little party we made on deck. How peaceful the city looked as the glorious moon lit up its mosques and minarets!

"Ah! by this time to-morrow," I reflected, "that peaceful city may be in ashes, and some of yonder fleet calmly shadowing the sparkling waters may be at the bottom of the harbor!"

But soldiers and sailors are too busy and too

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light-hearted to think of what to-morrow may bring. We were all very merry that night. There was but one gloomy man at the cheerful board, and that was the French captain; and the reason of his melancholy was that he would have no opportunity to distinguish himself, since his government had decided to keep out of the trouble, and had refused the British invitation to join in the enterprise.

Characteristic speeches were made by the guests. The American said many good things, but one I shall always remember: "Well, Beresford, I guess I should just like to be waltzing round with you to-morrow dropping a shell in here and there; and I know," pointing at the German captain, "that I am expressing the sentiments of that Dutchman yonder, when I say that he would like to do the same."

The German arose in his wrath, grew red in the face, then saw the joke, sat down again, and we all burst out laughing. It's a common thing for American sailors to call a German a Dutchman, but in Germany it was not advisable in those days to try it on with a Prussian officer, naval or military.

The Frenchman was quite pathetic at parting. Pressing the hand of his host, he sorrowfully said, "*Monsieur le Capitaine*, it is the fault of my government; but if I am not with you in body, I shall be with you in spirit. Adieu!"

Shortly before sunset the same evening Lord Charles Beresford, who had been in close consulta-

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tion with the Admiral on board the flagship, returned to the *Condor* and at once called the crew together, when from the bridge he gravely addressed them somewhat to this effect: "My men, the Admiral's orders to the *Condor* for to-morrow are to keep out of action, to transfer the signals of her bigger sisters, to more or less 'nurse' them if they get into trouble." Eloquent groans burst from the men. "But," continued their commander, "if an opportunity should occur" [and he, Beresford, rather had the idea that it would], "the *Condor* is to take advantage of it and prove her guns."

The crowd of upturned faces, listening to these significant remarks, now shone with satisfaction in the ruddy afterglow of the sunset; and then Lord Charles added that no matter what happened, he was confident that they would give a good account of themselves and their smart little ship. To see the gleam in their eyes, who could doubt that within them beat hearts as stout as in those hearts of oak of the grand old days?

All available canvas was then got out and draped round the inboard side of the ship's bulwarks and hammocks were slung round the wheel to protect the men and steering gear from flying splinters. The topmasts were lowered, the bowsprit was run in, and the gatling gun in the maintop was canvased round; even the "idlers"—who consist of the stewards, engine-room artificers, and odd hands—were armed and had ammunition given

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them. Nothing was left to the morning but sanding the decks.

There was little sleep that night. As I lay in my cot, courting slumber, in the fitfulness of my dreams I could catch the familiar squeaking noise of the fiddle coming from the fo'c'sle as the crew passed the feverish hours before the impending action with a hornpipe or some popular ditty. Even the old gunboat seemed to bestir herself long before dawn, for the hissing of steam and rattle of coal told me that the engineers were stoking her up for the struggle. At the first peep of day the *Condor* steamed off from her moorings and followed the other vessels out of the harbor as they took up their stations for bombarding.

The action I am about to describe was the first engagement I had been in at sea with the British fleet, and it savored of the old Nelsonian days. I think, therefore, it is worth relating for that reason alone; it was the last of the old style of fighting when ships went in close to their objectives and slogged away until one or the other threw up the sponge. The pugilistic expression may well be used, by-the-bye, for the sponge was a necessary factor in the firing of muzzle loaders. Naval warfare of today is familiar to the reader, owing to the achievements of the Allied fleet which has earned the unstinted praise of the whole world; but in those days it was so different in every feature!

After assisting H. M. S. *Temeraire*, who had fouled

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her chain on the Boghas reef, to get clear again, we had nothing much to do. The large ships were all busily engaged, but the *Condor* was marking time only, much to the disgust of the impatient crew. At last Beresford decided to exploit a fort which was playing long bowls with the Admiral's ship, anchored close in-shore and bombarding Fort Mex. Away we steamed. The men now stripped their jackets, the racers of the guns were oiled, the deck was sanded and the powder monkeys took up position.

As we neared Fort Marabout, and its terraces and embrasures bristling with Armstrong guns looked out of the morning haze, not a man aboard but knew the peril of our audacity—for a little gunboat, one of the smallest in Her Majesty's service, to dare attack the second most powerful fortress in Alexandria! But the shout of enthusiasm from the men when the order was given to "open fire" readily showed their confidence in their leader.

Our muzzle-loaders ran out "all a-port" and blazed away. The smoke hung heavily about the decks. The flash of the cannonade lit up for a moment the faces of the men already begrimed with powder and steaming with exertion, for the morning was hot and sultry. The captain from the bridge, with glass in hand, watching anxiously the aim of his gunners, would shout from time to time:

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"What was that, my men?"

"Sixteen hundred yards, sir."

"Give them eighteen this time, and drop it in."

"Aye, aye, sir!"

Then a shout from the men in the maintop told us on deck that the shot had hit its mark. The little ship quaked again and again with the blast of her guns. Our men became dark as negroes with the heavy black powder and were continually dipping their heads in the sponge buckets to keep the grit from their eyes.

At this moment, luckily, a slight breeze lifted the dense fog of smoke and all on board could plainly see the enemy working in their embrasures. One of our shots had fallen well within the enemy's works, and another had knocked off a yard or two of the scrap.

The Arab gunners now deliberately trained one of their Armstrongs in our direction. At the same moment our engine-bell sounded, and the *Condor* steamed ahead. There arose a puff of smoke from the fort, then came the rush of a shell through the air, and a spout of water leaped up far a-starboard.

A hearty cheer burst from our men as they leaped to their feet (for the order was to lie prone between shots) the enemy had missed us! When the Arabs reloaded and brought their guns to bear once more, the *Condor* steamed astern and this time their shell whistled across her bows. Meanwhile the enemy's fire on the ships attacking Fort Mex slackened,

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and soon ceased altogether. After silencing two of the enemy's guns, the *Condor* was obliged to retire out of action for lack of ammunition, but in spite of this the Admiral sent the signal now historic in the chronicles of the British Navy, "Well done, *Condor!*"

The episode of the *Condor* was one of the pleasantest I have ever taken part in. There was no blood or hurt about it—at least with us. The late Archibald Forbes in one of his charming lectures referred to the early days of the Russo-Turkish campaign as a perpetual picnic with a battle thrown in here and there for variety. This affair of ours was a water-party, with just sufficient black powder burned to create an appetizing thirst, with a long drink, not necessarily a soft one, thrown in now and again to quench it. As we joined the rest of the ships their crews manned the yards or rushed to the bulwarks as we passed by, shouting "Three cheers for Charley Beresford's ship!"

After the bombardment we covered for a short time the landing party sent to spike the guns of Fort Mex. Then the *Condor* was ordered to carry dispatches to the cable-ship *Chiltern*, which was standing by out at sea.

Cameron came on board—the *Standard* special correspondent who died with other heroes in the struggle for the relief of General Gordon a few years later. He will always be remembered by those remarkable telegrams, giving the exciting

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details of the bombardment, that from hour to hour were cried through the London streets in special editions of the *Standard*.

But few knew under what trying circumstances this brilliant coup of journalism was achieved. As soon as we put to sea the *Condor*, whether intoxicated with the excitement of her little exploit or inebriated with her newly acquired fame, behaved herself as badly as a Channel packet boat in choppy weather, for she pitched and rolled disgracefully. Poor Cameron suffered much through *mal-de-mer*. From the captain's cabin to the upper deck and the side of the vessel he was continually rushing to and fro, scribbling away at his telegrams. When we reached the *Chiltern* he staggered on board more dead than alive, but his despatches had plenty of vitality in them, and formed one of the ablest pieces of work he ever did.

When we returned to Alexandria the ironclads had finished their work of destruction. About five in the afternoon the fleet retired to its rendezvous outside the reefs and passes. The famous, historic city lay wreathed in smoke, and as the shades of night fell the glare of the burning harem of the Ras-el-tin palace, accidentally set afire by its proximity to the fort, was the only outward sign that the great God of War had that day sailed in Egyptian waters.

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Chapter XIII

CITY OF LURID LIGHT

The landing—Cameron and I penetrate to the square—Gruesome discovery—Our wary movements—We sight the American contingent—A welcome patrol—We serve in the first fight ashore—Dead Horse Picket—A scrimmage among the fishes—My broken-eared charger.

TOWARD the morning of the day following the bombardment of Alexandria fresh fires burst out in several quarters of the city. Apparently the great square was involved, for the flames leaped more fiercely in that direction. Evidently the Arabs were looting and burning.

The British fleet could hold the harbor and the stores down by the hard or *marina*, but the ships could not muster sufficient men to police the town, so the British Admiral was glad to accept the offer of the mercantile marine in the harbor to supply voluntary units from their crews for this duty ashore. Even then, there was only a sufficient number to patrol the quays and the streets for a few hundred yards inland. The interior of the town was a mass of flame and smoke, the latter hanging like a pall over the stricken city. No news had

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come from the inner portions for over two days when my friend Cameron and I agreed to penetrate as far as we could towards Place of Mehemet Ali Pasha, where all the finest European stores were located, and report their condition.

We left the *marina* at nightfall and slunk cautiously through the meaner streets, carefully avoiding the main thoroughfares. In the fitful light of distant flames as the burning embers shot skyward, we could see bodies lying here and there outside looted stores, probably Greeks who had elected to stand by their goods and had fallen at their posts; and occasionally a guilty-looking dog would slink by with a growl, disturbed in some orgy we dared not conjecture. Cats mewed piteously for water, for the mains had burst and all supply had ceased.

The rumble of the burning buildings, as they flared and toppled to the ground; the hissing of steam as the melting leaden piping let loose jets of water into the burning debris, and the howls and screams of frightened animals made the night hideous. At last we arrived at our destination and looked upon what was once the famous square. Never was sight more appallingly grand than this: a whole quadrangle of lurid flame. The trees, once the glory of the square, though set well in the center were shriveling in the heat. The sap was hissing into steam and the stems were beginning to split and burn.

With the exception of stray animals not a living

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thing was to be seen. It was most uncanny, as if the whole ghastly tragedy had been arranged for our private view. We stood spellbound for a moment, and then Cameron suddenly drew my attention to several weird-looking objects in the center of the square. With beating hearts we approached cautiously towards them, when in horror we both gasped, "They are mutilated bodies, armless, and headless." A thrill of terror passed through us, but as we drew nearer Cameron caught me by the sleeve and we came to a halt and laughed, for they were only dressmaker's dummies looted from a shop in the square, stripped of their finery and left to perish in the flames.

The old church standing a little back from the front face of the square was still intact, and the club near by had not yet caught fire. The police and court-house at the end of the Place were just beginning to shed smoke.

Anyway, we had penetrated into the heart of the city, so we now returned to the *marina*. The retrograde movement we considered to be fraught with danger, for though Arabs lurking in the shadows of the burning ruins might not feel inclined to attack while we advanced, thinking there was a body of troops behind us, they might well try to cut us off and murder us on our return. However, Cameron carried a repeating rifle and I had a six-shooter, so we felt fairly comfortable, and started back by the way we had come, as

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usual courting the shadows of the buildings still standing.

We kept close together and agreed that if we were attacked Cameron would kneel and I would stand up behind him with my revolver and in this formation we would open fire and do our best to knock over the enemy before they closed in upon us. We had not gone far when suddenly we heard the tramp of troops and at once we took cover in the shadow of a store. We knew that they could not be our own men for we had only sufficient patrols for the *marina*. Therefore they must surely be the enemy. Still there was about their footfall a smartness which did not suggest any of Arabi's men, and in another moment we were surrounded by American marines, who had been sent ashore from their warship in the harbor to assist the British bluejackets in keeping order in the town. We were able to give them information and directed them to the English club which they eventually made their headquarters.

We got safely back to the *marina* with our news and the next morning a small body of odd units and idlers from the ships in the harbor were mustered and began to police the city to stop the looting and any further firing of the buildings. Within a short time troops began to arrive and the land campaign against Arabi's army commenced. Also after that came the war correspondents. Birds of this feather generally flock

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together, not out of affection for each other's society, but to keep a watch on one another and to jump the news if possible. I had scored thus far with the fleet, but now I was stranded for want of a horse, something then most difficult to get as they had all been snapped up by the members of the fourth estate. I went to rest one night very disconsolate for this reason. At dawn there came a thundering knock on my door.

"What the deuce are you up to?" I shouted, as I sprang from my bed. "You'll break it down in a minute. Here! Stop that row. I'm coming," and in another moment it was open.

"You must have taken too much soda with your whisky last night. I have been trying to wake you for the last fifteen minutes!" said my friend and colleague, Drew Gaylor, the correspondent of a London daily.

"Well, what is it all about, now you're here?" said I. "At this time in the morning, too!"

"Put on your boots and come along," said my friend, as he looked at his watch. "In another hour the opening fight of the campaign will begin."

I looked at him as I sat on the edge of the bed, half-dazed with my sudden awakening.

"You're sure it isn't a fool's errand? For you know we have been sold with scares upon scares for the last five days."

"No, it's all right. I got the tip last night. The first regiment has been on the march for the last

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two hours already, and this time business is meant for a certainty."

"Well, Gaylor, it's very good of you to trouble yourself about me, but I haven't got a horse, so don't let me be a burden to you. I will come later."

"I've got a mount for you. It's all right. She is rather a sorry-looking beast, but she will carry you through the day for what work we want—saddle, bridle and all, so don't waste time. Get into your boots and come along. We shall be the only men there and you'll have to thank me for a good start in this war, for we shall be back with the news before these other fellows know there's any fighting going on."

It was not long before I was out in the open and mounted on the gray mare Gaylor had so thoughtfully brought for me. My quarters were near the Ramleh railway station, and the Mediterranean washed the shingle just below my window.

We had to ride along the shore for the first few hundred yards, past two famous obelisks which had stood as monuments in Cleopatra's time and were now lying half-buried in the sand and the scum and wash of the tideless sea. I little thought at that moment that only a few years later I would be looking at one of those obelisks from the table of a luxurious dining-room on the Thames Embankment, and that a few years later still I would be trying to make out the hieroglyphics on the face of the other in Central Park, New York.

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It was scarcely yet dawn and we would not trust ourselves to the possibility of delay at the Rosetta Gate, for the drawbridge was never down till sunrise; so Gaylor made for the railway embankment, which was a very good idea, as the metals ran straight through the enemy's lines, and by moving along the track we were bound to get somewhere near the front.

It was rather risky work in more ways than one, for there was a dull, gray mist hanging around us, forcing us to keep well between the rails for fear of a tumble down the steep embankment.

After the first excitement at suddenly finding myself on the eve of a big adventure, I pulled myself together and began to examine the steed that was carrying me. She was an iron-gray, weak-kneed looking brute, with her right ear lying flat along her neck, which gave her a very ugly and vicious aspect. I had seen upcountry horses in Australia wearing a similar expression when on the point of buck-jumping, so I said to Gaylor:

"What are the bad points about this mare? She looks a vicious beast, anyway."

"Oh, it's all right. She's as quiet as a lamb now."

"Was she ever wicked?"

"Yes, she had a devil of a temper once, but I cured her."

"Really? How do you account for that ugly-looking ear?"

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"That's just the point," said my friend. "She showed a bit of a temper one morning; she not only would not let me mount her, but wanted to eat me at the same time. So I simply tried an old South African dodge, which is always efficacious—I gave the brute a clout with a crowbar across her right ear which laid it flat along her neck, as you see, and it has remained there ever since. You can trust that animal with your best girl now. She is as sweet tempered a beast as you ever straddled."

I was young and trustful in those days, and though it seemed a cruel way of horse-taming, I never doubted my friend's South African experiences for a moment, especially as the mare picked her way carefully over the sleepers and never showed a bit of vice all through the day. But I had occasion to remember the animal, as will appear later.

On approaching the village of Ramleh the line swerved to the left, and we passed through a station that had a suggestion of a Swiss chalet about it. At its back, on a ramp of ground which farther on dipped down toward the sea, were a few rather fine-looking villas, and standing in the center of a clump of palm trees was the Hotel de Beau Sejour. There was, however, not much of *beau sejour* now about the vicinity, for down by the station on the night before, under the Egyptian moon and the shadow of swaying palms, a bloody little skirmish had taken place. The model chalet-station had

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received an unwelcome visit from the picturesquely garbed Bedouins of the desert. The ticket-office was riddled with bullets and the signal-post for the down-line was knocked out of gear. This mattered little, for there was no train service either, with the exception of the iron-clad truck on which a six-pounder had been mounted by our bluejackets. The line was always clear to them; if not, they cleared it with common shell. There was not a living soul in or round this village of Beau Sejour when we passed through it that morning, save a few stray dogs sniffing about the bodies of two or three Bedouins.

Out toward the desert on our right the line ran along a high embankment, looking in its contortions like a veritable sea-serpent stranded on the sand. The head of the monster seemed to rise a little as it was lost in the enemy's camp at Kaffir-el-Douar, its tail trailing off through the chalet-station, where, for the moment, we had come to a halt for breakfast.

A ration of canned beef and cold tea was consumed under the shadow of the booking-office, for the sun, although but a few minutes above the horizon, had dispelled the mist hanging over the desert, and scorching day was upon us.

About a mile from the station we came across some men of the 60th Rifles who were stripped to their flannels and hastily throwing up breastworks. From one trench a grim relic had been unearthed—an almost perfect skeleton of a man. Tommy,

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with his ever ready if not over-nice sense of the ludicrous, had made a scarecrow of it and had stuck it up on the top of the parapet as a wholesome warning to the enemy's sharpshooters. Every moment fresh objects were being discovered as Mr. Atkins sweated and swore at his work, now metal buttons, now belt-clasps, or shreds of cloth.

Examining some of the buttons I found them to be of English regimental pattern, but a belt-clasp was decidedly French. Then the explanation occurred to us: we were preparing to fight on the very ground where, three-quarters of a century ago, the English under Abercrombie fought the French under Menon, and both found a common grave. Well, to what better purpose could the dust of those brave dead be put than to protect their living countrymen from the bullets of the foe? As soon as it was realized that the bones were probably those that once belonged to our brethren in arms there were no more scarecrows seen decorating the parapets of the trenches.

Our scouts were already in touch with the enemy. Down by a fringe of palms, fig trees and wild cacti skirting a road running at right angles to the railway through the enemy's lines, little puffs of smoke were floating upward. Men were busy down there killing each other. Round and about a few mud huts the red tarboosh of the Egyptians could be distinctly seen, but their wearers did not cling to those huts for long. Our advancing line of skir-

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mishers pressed them too hard and they soon retired up the road to the shelter of their works. An Egyptian officer riding a white horse tried to rally the stragglers, but his charger was shot under him and he hurriedly joined his retreating men.

The horse he left behind lay dead in the shadow of a thick clump of palms at the angle of the road. This point, leading direct to the Egyptian stronghold, became historic during the campaign; it was always under the enemy's fire and very often under ours. I remember later in the day moving along that road, not knowing that the enemy's bullets swept so far. I was riding about three hundred yards behind a famous British officer and his aide-de-camp, when, without any warning he and his aide plunged down the left bank of the road, carefully avoiding that clump of trees. I thought this was strange behavior until I neared the spot myself, when a sound like the buzzing of mosquitoes around me and the twang of a bullet or two into the body of the dead horse, caused me to follow the example of that famous British officer. "Dead Horse Picket" soon became noted for the pungency of its situation.

The miseries of war, even in this uninteresting petty skirmish, were only too apparent. In the shadow of one of the mud huts on the roadside lay a negro woman, dying. She had just been delivered of a child, which lay dead in the sand by her side. Bending over her was an Arab woman who had

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pluckily remained behind. I made signs that they need not fear, and gave the poor creature some water.

With the exception of the dead horse and the negress no other casualties occurred in the first brush with the enemy, and Tommy Atkins was soon climbing fig trees and quenching his thirst with the green, juicy pods. Occasionally a bullet came in his direction, but figs were a luxury and Tommy didn't mind running a little risk. We ascertained, however, as a result of this skirmish, that Arabi intended to remain on the defensive, that the enormous wall of sun-dried mud cutting the road and railway at Kaffir-el-Douar was to be our objective, and that the Egyptian commander would not trouble us until we attacked his stronghold.

The whole affair was hardly worth the trouble of turning out of our bed so early, but still Gaylor and I were the only correspondents on the spot, and our telegrams would make good captions for the newsboys to cry in the streets of London. Therefore we hurried back with the news. Dusty and weary, we sighted at last the walls of Alexandria. The drawbridge was just being raised and the portcullis dropped for the night as we spurred our horses on to it and trotted through the town to our quarters.

As we walked into the Hotel Abbot we could not hide our satisfaction in scoring over our fellow correspondents. We took our accustomed seats

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at the table and commenced dinner. Our colleagues had not seen us all day, and they looked up at us with inquiring glances. A gloom began to settle on their faces as they noticed our exultant mood, for there had been thunder in the air and they suspected that we had been where the storm had burst. Indeed their concern was justified, for there were only two London papers next morning which published an account of the first infantry brush with the enemy in the Egyptian campaign of '82.

The vicious-looking brute I had ridden to the skirmish I saw no more. Three months afterward I was requested by letter to visit the headquarters staff in Alexandria. After I had been served with a cup of coffee and a cigarette, one of the officers said, "Were you ever acquainted with Mr. Gaylor, the war correspondent, who has recently been recalled to England?"

"Oh, yes, I knew him quite well."

"Good! We want to know whether you remember how many horses he had."

"Oh, I can tell you that easily enough. He had two, one of which I've ridden myself. One was a brown horse, the other a gray mare."

"A gray mare, Mr. Villiers? Do you know where he got it?"

"No."

"We put this question," said the officer, "because there is an old Arab who has been bothering us for many weeks now and who accuses Mr. Gaylor of

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having taken the horse from him—or at all events of flinging him a napoleon and requisitioning the animal; and the Arab does not consider that adequate payment was made for his steed. He gives a full description of the gray mare. He says she has a broken right ear, which lies back on her neck."

"Ah!" I cried. "That Arab must be a lying old scoundrel. It is certainly a description of the horse I rode, but Gaylor himself broke her ear to cure her of bad temper."

The officers looked at me with astonishment. They were even more astonished when I told them of Gaylor's South African experiences in taming horses. They roared with laughter. Then the truth dawned on me and I laughed too.

British redcoats, for it was before the days of khaki, were now pouring into Alexandria apparently with the object of attacking Arabi at Kaffir-el-Douar. But when Sir Garnet Wolseley arrived to take command the whole army was shifted by transports to Suez and sent up the Canal to Ismalia, where the troops were landed and pushed forward in the direction of Cairo. But there were many dramatic incidents before that goal was reached. After several minor skirmishes with the enemy along the line of rail and the Sweetwater Canal, Kassassin was captured in a brilliant charge one night by the Household Brigade, and at this point the serious work of the campaign commenced.

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Chapter XIV

A GHOSTLY MARCH

I am invited to dine with the Guards—My vanished host—Ghostly relics —The bivouac—Mysterious water-wagon—The midnight scare—The silent army—Tel-el-Kebir—Cold Steel—The charge of the Irish and Scots—The pipers in the trenches—My lost pony turns up.

THE British army in the Egyptian campaign of 1882 was many weeks concentrating at Kassassin, preparatory to the final march on Tel-el-Kebir, where Arabi Pasha apparently intended to make his last stand to stop our advance upon Cairo.

So strong was Arabi's position that Sir Garnet Wolseley, in spite of his considerable force of 13,000 men, would not venture to assault the Egyptian works by day, but resolved on a night attack. This fact had not, however, been taken into account when I was invited by the officers of the Grenadier Guards to dine with them on the evening of September 12th.

"Seven sharp. Bring your own cup, plate, knife, and fork," they said.

These gentlemen of the Guards are not always the fops that is sometimes supposed. The gilded

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salons of London society are occasionally deserted by them for less elegant apartments. For instance, the interior of the house in which I was to dine constituted one large room which was used as refectory, reception-room, and dormitory.

At night myriads of mosquitoes and less aerial but more irritating insects would swarm around and attack us. During the day the flies had it all their own way and nearly maddened us by their persistency in crawling over our perspiring faces and hands.

The Guards roughed it with admirable composure, and it was quite a common occurrence to see the heir to a British peerage standing patiently in the doorway of a shanty with a strong contingent of flies about his head and, tin cooking-pot in hand, apologetically asking his sweating companions who had just come off duty and were stretching themselves on the floor whether they would object to onions in their soup. For a scout, at the risk of his life, had brought in a pocketful of leeks from the enemy's lines which he had presented to the officers' mess.

On the day when I was to dine with the Guards I was away from camp on a trip to Ismalia, whither I had gone to post a budget of sketches. Upon my return to Kassassin at six in the evening, with a considerable appetite, I found to my consternation that, though the tents were all standing intact, the British army had disappeared, and with it my

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prospects of dinner. All that remained of the once busy encampment of the Guards was empty tents and piles of heavy baggage containing nothing edible. The cooking fires were still blazing (I learned afterwards this was to fool the enemy, in the belief the troops were still in camp), but the fleshpots of the British were as much a thing of the past as those of the Egyptians of olden times.

However, it was not the first time I had gone dinnerless, so I gave my pony a drink of water, lit my pipe, took in my belt an inch or two, and set my face desertward in search of my hosts. This piece of strategy—keeping the camp-fires ablaze for hours after our forces had quitted the ground—was of great use to me, for their dull glare became an excellent guide and I knew, if I held them in view, that I must be moving parallel to the Sweetwater Canal, which was on the left flank of our line of march. But soon a thin haze slowly stole over the desert and the fires gradually died away in the deepening gloom. It was curious—this night effect—and most perplexing. All sound of the advancing army was lost in the soft sand; not a murmur penetrated the haze which veiled the desert, chilling one with its moisture and preventing one from seeing more than a few yards in front, though the sky immediately above was clearly visible with myriads of brightly twinkling stars.

My pony was very restless, neighing incessantly and showing considerable nervousness. At last he

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became almost out of hand. Pricking up his ears, he snorted and pawed the ground; his eyes, almost starting from their sockets, strained to right and left, apparently seeking some object. Presently a curious smell impregnated the atmosphere and a ghostly phosphorescent light dimly flickered along the sand. At this my horse stood stock-still, and began trembling as if suddenly attacked with palsy. Soon, straight in front of us, appeared a luminous mass, which gradually took the form of a dead man, lying on its back, with its skull grinning up through the bluish vapor. "Ah!" I thought shuddering, "one of those wretched Arabs who met his fate in the famous charge of Kassassin." I pricked my pony forward, for the night grew chilly, but these horrors continually barred my path, bringing my fagged horse to a sudden halt, till at last, sickening with the ghastly monotony of the ride, I thought to myself, "If I don't soon find the British army I shall probably be found, one of these hazy nights, lighting the desert in the same indistinct and unsatisfactory manner, for, undoubtedly, if I proceed much farther without meeting friends, some Bedouin scout will want to cross swords with me." I had nothing with me but my messing knife and a six-shooter, the latter an uncertain weapon in a fog.

At last a loud neigh from my horse, to suppress which, in my anxiety not to attract the enemy's attention, I almost throttled him, was answered

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from our immediate front by a less euphonious animal—a commissariat mule; and a moment later I almost tumbled over a veritable Tommy Atkins, who resented my familiarity with an expletive which, though vulgar, was quite a refreshing form of speech to me. I had struck the 60th Rifles.

"Where are the Guards?" said I.

"On the extreme right," replied an officer, and I was also informed that the Rifles were in bivouac until midnight and were in support of the Highland Brigade. When at last I came up with the right of the Highland Brigade, most of the men were peacefully slumbering on their arms. It struck me that the Guards would be on their left flank, so I rode down the line till, arriving at the last companies of the 74th, I boldly marched out on to the plain, thinking that I should soon come in touch with the Grenadiers. Luckily, I fixed two stars over the Highland position before I pushed forward. But I found no signs of the Guards, and presently my horse came to a standstill, staring into the gloom, and I discovered a dark object in front of me. I covered it with my revolver and shouted, "Who goes there?" when to my surprise a man stood up and answered, "Friend."

I found that he was one of the telegraph transport, searching for the end of a lost cable. He had advanced with the army, but had missed his way and the wire too. Upon his informing me that there were no British troops in his vicinity I knew

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that we were on the line of the enemy's outposts, so I persuaded him to return with me to the Highland Brigade. No sooner had we arrived in the bivouac than a most remarkable scene took place. In the twinkling of an eye the men, with suppressed curses, were struggling to their feet and fixing bayonets and huddling together in rallying square formation, apparently preparing to resist cavalry. Even the supports scrambled to their feet as the panic wave passed over the desert.

"For God's sake, what's the matter?" whispered the officers as they tried to suppress the excitement of the men.

To this day there is no answer given for that remarkable scare. It was called "the nightmare" of that famous march. The excitement soon died out, but there was little further sleep, for soon the men were pulling themselves together for the coming fray.

I had by this time come to the conclusion that it was no use hunting farther for the Guards; it was too much like looking for a needle in a pottle of hay or a bayonet on a misty desert; so I decided to throw in my lot with the 42d Highlanders.

I had not gone far before I came across the bonny Scots. The Black Watch was drawn up in line and rations of liquor were being served out to each man from suspicious smelling water-carts whose contents savored more of sunny Jamaica than of the muddy depths of the adjacent canal.

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Never was the ruddy alcohol more wisely administered than on this occasion. Almost benumbed and wet to the skin with the heavy dew of the desert as the troops were, this rum ration put new life into them.

When the order was given to the men to fix bayonets, the glint of the steel was mirrored in their eyes, now shining with the glow of the grateful "tot."

Veritable dogs of war they looked, as they stood steady, waiting for the word, like hounds eager to be slipped on their quarry. Their gallant old leader, Cluny McPherson, mounted his charger and addressing his regiment in a quiet voice, said, "Men, not a shot is to be fired! All work must be done wi' cauld steel! the Forty-twa will advance!"

In lowered tones the command passed from flank to flank, and noiselessly the dark columns moved off through the haze, for the thud of their feet was lost almost immediately in the velvet surface of the desert. Only an occasional murmur or the glint of a bayonet tokened to the night that a vast host was advancing. I stood watching this somewhat weird sight when presently my ear caught a curious noise, like the far distant roar of the breaker on a coral reef, and presently I spied a long, dark, funereal line moving over the desert toward me. Amid the sullen roar was the clanking of chains and a grating of wheels as they crunched through the sand: forty-two cannon in line now

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broke the horizon of the desert. A very bad quarter of an hour the Arabs were likely to have when this enormous battery started its thunder that morning. "The whole forty-two are to open fire upon a given point of the enemy's positions," was the order, "if our infantry receives the slightest check in the trenches."

The British army that night was led, literally speaking, by a young naval officer, gallant Lieutenant Rawson, R.N., who kept his direction by the stars. The dawn was to see that faithful guide cut down in his youth and vigor. He was the first to fall, shot through the lungs. When death came upon him his last words as he pressed the hand of his chief were, "I led them straight, sir!"

The air soon became very cold—that unmistakable chill which immediately precedes the dawn of day; and presently a faint gray light penetrated the haze, gradually unveiling the desert beyond. Before the mist had lifted sufficiently for me quite to distinguish the British battalions forming for the coming attack sparks of fire leaped up and a hail of bullets came singing over the plain from a long sandy ridge breaking the plain in our immediate front. Then from flank to flank of the enemy's works one lambent yellow flame seemed to rill the desert, but there was not a shot fired in return from our silent battalions now lying with stomach to sand in front of that death-belching trench. A sharp cry or a suppressed groan were the only

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signs that the mute army which the dispersing mist was unveiling to the eyes of the astonished Arabs was of living flesh and blood.

In their fright and frenzy the Egyptian troops, with half-closed eyes and unsteady nerve, fired apparently at random, as if they had been suddenly awakened from the throes of a nightmare. Many of their bullets skimmed wildly over the heads of our soldiers, spurting up the sand as they furrowed the drift beyond.

"When will the 'advance' be sounded? When will the order come?" asked our men as they hugged the sand. The passing minutes seemed an eternity to the troops lying inactive under that galling fire.

Suddenly the shrill blast of the bugles rang out. Then springing to its feet, swiftly and silently the front line sped on. The terrible hail of musketry from the trenches entangled the onrushing troops for a moment with falling, dying and dead. But only for a moment, for now our dogs of war gave tongue. With wild cheers and to the screech of the bagpipes the 42d Highlanders and the 18th Royal Irish seemed to outvie each other to be the first to strike for the honor of their flag that morning.

Down into the gaping trench, surging up over the gilded ridge of murderous fire, our men pressed forward at the charge. Then, mixing in deadly struggle with the foe, they commenced the bloody work of the bayonet. The yells of anguish and shouts of "Allah! Allah! Allah!" were drowned in

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the weird screel of the bagpipes, and in a few minutes all was over. Arabi's great earthworks were captured and the battle was won.

When the lilac dawn broke, two miles of deep trenches stretching at right angles from the canal inland, were crowded with Egyptian dead, and large red pools were soaking into the yellow sand. The silent bayonets had done their work well. The line of retreat on the plain beyond was speckled with dead and wounded. The latter, as the sun climbed the heavens scorching all beneath him, sat up in their agonizing thirst and whimpered for water. One old man raised himself as I passed by and muttered the Hindustani word *pani*, pointing to his parched lips. I wondered that he had lived so long, for at least two feet of his bowels were trailing in the dust from a bayonet thrust.

I counted nine of the Highlanders, all resting in easy attitudes on the desert as if in deep slumber, shot through the brain. One young officer of the Black Watch—Grahame Sterling—was dying by the side of his color-sergeant, who had just breathed his last. I was wondering what I could do to alleviate his suffering when a little drummer boy standing near, thinking I was about to sketch the painful scene, snatched a pocket-handkerchief from the breast of his dying officer and gently let it fall on his face. It was a graceful and thoughtful act of the boy's which I shall never forget.

By this time the sun was well up, and the cries of

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wounded for water were heartrending to hear. I was quite exhausted and without the precious liquid myself, for an accident had occurred to me early in the fight. I had dismounted when the enemy opened fire, and stood by my pony—a rat of a breast, but hardy enough. My English saddle was rather large for him and I had sought to get around this difficulty by fixing it up with a blanket. When the first crackle of musketry broke the stillness of the desert he became much excited, and when the enemy shelled us he began waltzing round so energetically that I thought I had better mount him. Whether the fatigue of the night march or his empty stomach was the cause I do not know, but he appeared to be considerably shrunk, for I was not seated an instant in the saddle before the whole gear slipped under the animal's belly.

I disengaged my feet from the stirrups as I struck the desert, and my pony, tickled by the saddle between his legs, reared and plunged like a rocking-horse till a shell whistled over his head, when he bolted at top speed to the rear. It was hopeless to follow him, in spite of the fact that he carried my glasses, sketch-book and water-bottle; so I resignedly watched him careering across the desert till he darted into the zone of shell-fire, when a splinter apparently knocked him over for he fell and did not rise again. It was a casualty I could not dally to remedy, so with a sigh I pushed forward toward the trenches.

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As I sat contemplating the sad loss of my water-bottle after the fight was over, a colleague, who was late for the fray, came riding toward me and in a voice of great glee said, "Look, Villiers, here's a find." I rose and faced him, all astonishment. "A rattling nice little beast, saddle and all. Found him sitting on the desert about two miles away. Well, why the devil don't you congratulate me?"

"I do," said I, "and I'm much obliged for your kindness in picking him up. That pony belongs to me."

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Chapter XV

THE CROWNING OF A TSAR

Arabi and Tewfik—The lure of Shepherds—The journalistic spider on the stoop—What comes into its meshes—Two great explorers and a pro-consul—"House of Commons" and a pair of dukes—Our fighting Prince of Wales—Belated honors—I am made Chevalier—Invited by the Tsar to his Coronation—My bluff—A red-coated general—I am made prisoner—My durance vile.

I WAS in Cairo for some months after its occupation by the British forces, which followed closely on the heels of Tel-el-Kebir, and was at the trial of Arabi, who had been taken prisoner and was now lying in jail. I rather admired him for the good fighting he had put up and I thought I would ask him to let me make a water-color drawing for *Vanity Fair*. He had no objection, so one morning I entered his cell with my sketch-book. He was expecting to be shortly condemned to death and was a little nervous, and I could see he was very uneasy when I took out my metal sketch-box. He gave a sudden start and his face turned ashen gray. Then he pulled himself together; in fact, he straightened himself and fearlessly faced me, apparently thinking I had some new and deadly

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weapon with which I was going to put him out of business quietly in his prison, a method much in vogue with Orientals when dealing with culprits of Arabi's caliber. It saved so much trouble, and all that the outside world generally knew of the matter was that the prisoner had had some fatal seizure.

However, he was much relieved when I showed him the colors and what I was about to do. I am afraid I was one of those Englishmen who had considerable sympathy with the Egyptian patriot and I was pleased when his death sentence was eventually commuted to banishment. I saw him twice after this interview, both times in Ceylon, where he was interned. Once, en route to Australia, I landed and went up to his little bungalow and had a chat with him and a few of his followers. At another time, returning from the Antipodes, I arrived in the harbor of Colombo the day he was released from banishment. I watched him go on board the transport with his compatriots and sail out into the Indian Ocean, bound for his native land once more, and I was glad. His prison in Cairo was in the Caserne, opposite the Abden Palace where his arch enemy, the Khedive Tewfik, lived.

The day before I sketched Arabi I was invited by His Highness the Khedive to the Palace to receive the decoration of the Officers' Class of the Turkish Order of the Medjidie, with which he personally presented me. Here was the man who a few months ago had been trembling in his shoes at

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the prospect of Arabi becoming "top dog," now from his front windows watching his opponent safely bottled up in a cellar of the barracks over the way. Such was the *bouleversement* of affairs in Egypt in those days.

Hearing that General Sir Garnet Wolseley was about to leave for England, I called to thank him for what he had done for the war correspondents during the campaign. Now, it was the common opinion of my confreres that he had sadly neglected them, which Wolseley well knew, so when I wished him good-by, the general slyly looked at me and with a smile acknowledged he had done very little for the press, but in the next war he would try to befriend me. This promise I kept fresh in my memory.

I did not hurry from the city of the Caliphs, there was so much of interest to be seen in those days. We had to gad about on donkeys and camels or in *fiacres;* there were no automobiles or street-cars, and of course the principal hotel was the historic Shepherds. As I sat on its stoop, I felt very much like a journalistic spider in a huge web looking out for copy, so many interesting folk came into the meshes of this wonderful hostelry—from gadfly tourists to great bluebottle flies of commerce and other species of big-bugs.

One day I was lazily puffing at a cheroot, stretching myself in a lounge chair, playing with two bull-dogs belonging to Luigi the manager, when the

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flies began to arrive from the station. The first carriage disgorged two occupants; a rather severe looking lady in black, followed slowly by a man, mounted the steps in stately manner. The man halted half-way up to wipe the sweat from his forehead, for the weather was then intensely humid in Cairo. As he raised his soft Alpine hat a slant of sunlight caught the side of his face and lit up a rugged, deep-set scar which ran from below the left eye right down the jaw. The red light gave a remarkable crimson hue to the wound, as if the cut had been freshly made. The whole face was stern and rather repellent. It was the head of a portrait I had seen as a student on the walls of the Royal Academy which had a magnetic charm for me; I remembered it at once. "The Consul of Trieste," was the title, and it was painted by Sir Frederick Leighton.

"Excuse me!" I said, "but are you not the Consul of Trieste?" The man looked at me almost with a scowl on his strong, rugged face, as much as to say, "Who the devil are you, sir?"

"Forgive me," I continued, "but I was suddenly impelled to address you, I can't tell why, but I have always been impressed by a certain portrait painted by Leighton which appeared in the Academy in my student days called by that title. I felt certain that you were the sitter."

There was a curious half-amused glint in his deep-set eyes as he said, "My name's Burton, I was

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Consul of Trieste, and you are right about the portrait." We sat down and chatted. Of course it all dawned on me; he was the great explorer—the hero of a hundred-and-one marvelous adventures which had fascinated my youth.

What a charm of manner he had in spite of that stern, almost repulsive, exterior. This was the Sir Richard Burton who put before the world the real unvarnished and delightful translation of *The Arabian Nights* that made such a stir in the puritanical world in the 'eighties.

On the following evening we were smoking with other idlers, awaiting the arrival of the train, when the procession of *fiacres* with their dusty and weary occupants drove up. A solitary figure stepped out of the last carriage. As this man mounted the steps the last rays of the sun lit up his face with vividness exactly similar to Burton's on the previous evening. I gave a start as the clean-cut features and crisp beard stood out in Rembrandt-like glow.

"Look, Sir Richard," I whispered, "this is a curious coincidence; there is the artist who painted your portrait." And Sir Frederick Leighton passed us and went on into the hotel. The great president of the Royal Academy had come out to make sketches of lilac dawn on the Nile for one of his masterpieces.

It was here on the stoop that I met Mr. (afterward Sir Harry) Johnstone. He had just arrived

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from one of his extraordinary wanderings in Central Africa. Considering the ordinary ravages of climate and hardship of African travel one would expect to see a sun-baked, shriveled-up type of individual. Instead of this a dapper, bright-looking youth, with rosy cheeks and complexion like a peach shook my hand. He had been a colleague on the *Graphic*, the pages of which had been embellished with his charming works for years. Later, while he was commander-in-chief for the Uganda protectorate, he painted pictures full of tropical color, pictures before which I have stood at the Royal Academy, on a dark, dismal day in London, feeling that I was back again in the full flood of the light and warmth of the sunny East.

Sir Evelyn Baring—afterwards Lord Cromer—used occasionally to walk up the stoop. My first impression of the maker of modern Egypt was that he was somber and pompous, but when off the diplomatic stage he was affability itself. The first reception when he took up his residency was most stiff and formal and was somewhat resented by the officers who by hard fighting through a sweltering Egyptian summer had been the means of creating the *raison d'etre* of his office. The little finger of his right hand and a haughty smile were the extent of his cordiality as the brilliant queue filed past. This reception was the origin of the sobriquet, "Sir Over Baring." Later on I was returning to Egypt on board the S. S. *Tanjore*, the weather was

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abominably rough and there was only one other passenger beside myself who frequented the canvased-in portion of the deck that served for smokers. My companion I found to be the late pro-consul of Egypt. I thought that he might have remembered my resenting his attitude at his first reception in Cairo by quietly linking my own little finger in his; but not a bit of it; he was most genial, and I had many a pleasant evening with him in that abominable makeshift of a smoking-room. A very tall, lean Velasquez-featured Scotchman, with a touch of the heather about his costume, came into the hotel one day. I found he represented the "House of Commons" in the shape of an excellent brand of whisky. He had a very charming personality—bright and joyous as his own blend—and we saw many sights of the old city together.

Some years ago I was lecturing in the south of England, when I received a letter from Mr., now Sir James, Buchannan, Bart., asking me to stay the night at his country-seat neat Petworth. I remember turning into a long drive and approaching a palatial block of buildings, and as the coachman did not stop I asked, "Where are you driving to?" "The house," said he, "these are only the stables."

The "House of Commons" had built this magnificent residence for my friend, and in America he would be called a multi-millionaire.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, a

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handsome keen personality, would sometimes look in at Shepherds. I doubt if there is a keener soldier or an officer who knows more about his profession than the duke. His great misfortune from a soldier's point of view is that he is a prince of the Royal House and therefore his duties do not always lie in the direction of campaigning. One cannot help thinking that if he had lived in the Middle Ages, when it was the acknowledged business of princes to be famous in war, the duke would have taken an active part in every campaign in which his country was involved, for his heart and soul were evidently in the fighting life of the soldier.

I had met him several times during the campaign, for he was in command of the Guards brigade. A little fight at El Macfar, just before the attack on Tel-el-Kebir, grew into a rather big affair, and Sir Garnet was obliged to send for reinforcements. The Guards were ordered up, but before they arrived the fighting was over and I was returning from the action with my budget of sketches to Ismalia, when, riding across the desert by the side of the railway embankment, I saw the Guards, their faces all aglow with anticipation of the coming fight. As they approached I rode up the embankment, dismounted a few paces before the general, and saluted. He asked me for information, and I told him "that it was all over." A look of keen disappointment came into his fine blue eyes which a moment before were full of eager expectancy. As

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the ominous news was passed down the ranks the whole brigade seemed to lose its elasticity, the buoyant stride of the men slowed down at once into a tramp of almost a funeral cadence, as the disappointed regiments passed onward into the gloom of the gathering night.

The postal service in Egypt was in the hands of a contingent of the 24th Middlesex Volunteers, a regiment in which I had the honor for many years of holding Her Majesty's commission, of which the Duke of Teck was honorary colonel. One morning a few of my men were under quite a considerable shell-fire: the Duke of Connaught happened to ride into our camp near Kasassin shortly afterward and hearing of the incident sent word to say he would like to take tea with us, a graceful act on his part to show his appreciation of our services as volunteers.

Our present Prince of Wales seems to have a fighting spirit similar to that of his granduncle, for in the recent Great War he has shown himself as fearless and as keen as our first soldier-princes of the Royal House, who, five centuries ago, fought over the same ground, at Crecy and Agincourt.

His grandfather on his mother's side, the Duke of Teck, also was out in Egypt. I met him several times and he never forgot to look after me whenever he could. I remember one broiling hot morning standing in the desert near the line of rail by a water-tank hoping that the next train would stop

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to take up water and that I might find something to cheer the inner man.

I was very tired, miserable, and uncomfortable, for I had just discovered that I had been sleeping on the body of a dead Arab and I was still in a nightmare of horrors. It had been dark the night before when, after watching a skirmish with the enemy which had lasted almost the whole day, I threw my weary body on the sand. The atmosphere around me was sour enough, but I was used to that and slept peacefully till the aroma so increased in intensity that by the first peep of day I sat up fairly nauseated and looked round to see if there were any carrion lying about. I dare not describe the sight that greeted my eyes, but as an old friend of mine used to say when he tried to express himself, "My dear boy, it was too too!"

The grateful snort of an engine presently came over the desert and before long a cattle-truck train rattled along and to my joy stopped at the water-tank. Almost at the same moment a familiar voice shouted from one of the trucks, "My dear Villiers, come here," and I saw the head of my colonel over the top of a truck as he hailed me. My heart leaped with joy, for I knew wherever the Duke of Teck was there were extra rations for a friend. I ran up to him and he said, "Scramble in here, there's room," and presently I was in the midst of General Sir Garnet Wolseley's staff, reviving my jaded spirits with a cool drink.

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After the campaign was over I called to say good-by to His Highness. "Ah!" said he on looking at my tunic, "How is it you have not got the medal?" I told him that the government had not given them to war correspondents. "But," he cried with indignation, "my servant, who polishes my boots—and that is all he has done in the campaign—has the medal, and you who have seen every fight and been in action with the troops, have not got it? It's a shame. I will see about it, my dear Villiers, you shall have it!" It never came, but I am certain the good-natured duke did all he could for me.

Lord Wolseley expressed the same opinion and said, "If you don't get the medal nothing can stop you from wearing the bars for the actions you have witnessed, and in this matter you have my permission." So among the many decorations I sometimes wear there are four silver bars on a blue and white ribbon, but no medal. It may come some day; after all, it's only thirty-seven years ago. I have not lost all hope, for in the year 1893, to my surprise, the Serbian government presented me, through their Minister in London, with the medal of the Chevalier of the order of the Takova. They gave this reason for awarding me the belated decoration: they had just discovered that, at considerable risk of life and limb, I had saved a large store of ammunition at Deligrad from going up by the burning of the house in which it had been hidden. I searched my memory for the incident and finally

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remembered tearing off the thatched roof of a house in flames, with my friend and colleague the late Archibald Forbes, during the Serbian war with Turkey, just seventeen years before.

Probably in another decade the British War Office, if my friends there are not all dead, will wake up to the fact that I have not yet got that war medal of thirty-seven years ago and will send it on—but I wonder what my address will be in those days.

The Duke of Teck's gallant son, the late Prince Francis, was also familiar with the stoop at Shepherds. It was a number of years afterward that I met him—during Kitchener's campaign. He had all the unconventional *bonhomie* of his father. Finding that I had lost some of my kit coming up the Nile, he kindly fixed me up with a shirt and a toothbrush. I hardly liked taking the latter but he assured me he had others by showing me a dozen in celluloid cases from Truefitts. "It's awkward to be without one," he went on, "I am always provided for."

The garment which the Prince gave me had the ducal coronet and monogram stitched upon it in a corner. Later on at a certain hotel the proprietor and staff became suddenly very obsequious in their attitude toward me, and I found at about the same time that I had sent the shirt to the laundry. They no doubt thought that I was traveling incognito, and the title of a vaudeville song sprang to my mind, "It all comes out in the wash."

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When I returned to England after the quelling of the Egyptian uprising I found an invitation to the coronation of the Tsar Alexander III, which turned out to be the most gorgeous pageant I ever witnessed. I had met the Emperor as Tsarevitch when with the Russian army in Turkey, but in spite of this I had to be up to all kinds of antics to go where I wanted after arriving in Moscow. I worked at a great disadvantage as compared with literary correspondents who could at times get their material at second hand. With me I had to see the thing in order to sketch it.

I wore the Windsor uniform with sword and cocked hat, and this, together with my string of decorations, which in those days was beginning to grow, assisted me considerably. Only one representative of the British press was allowed in the cathedral in which the Tsar was crowned, but I had to get there all the same. When the great bells were clanging and drums rolling as the Emperor took his place at the head of the procession to march to the church from the Kremlin, and everybody was on the tiptoe of excitement, I began my stunt by pushing my way through the crowd. Uniforms and decorations go a long way to impress people in Russia, and they made way for me right up to the close formation of soldiers guarding the Imperial route. This was the first real barrier, but with haughty mien I requested the soldiers to make room, as I was late for the cathe-

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dral. To my surprise and delight they opened out without a murmur; then I hurried down the crimson carpeted path to the door of the church. Here I became reckless, pushing aside one or two officers standing on the threshold. On seeing me flash by they simply murmured to each other "Diplomat" and I was in the church. Now I did not care; I boldly commenced sketching. In fact I had rushed two or three officials to pose for me on the steps of the dais, when a chamberlain came up and asked to see my ticket. But now the fanfare of trumpets and the rolling of drums grew near and the shouts of the populace drowned all my explanation about dropping my ticket, and I was pushed into a corner to be out of the way, just as His Imperial Majesty arrived.

The same night at the great banquet in the famous hall of St. George which was reserved for the Tsar, his crowned guests, and the Ambassadors and diplomatic corps only, I bluffed again. When the fanfare of trumpets heralded the arrival of the Emperor and Empress in their jewels and gorgeous raiment and the glittering guests had seated themselves, I hurriedly walked in looking very much "fussed" over being so late and commenced stalking up and down the aisles between the tables looking for my seat.

It was just at the moment when the first dishes were being brought in and I was becoming very indignant at not finding my seat, which of course

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was never there, that a splendid being in wonderful livery brought a chair to appease my ruffled feelings as well as my appetite, and I was sandwiched in between two diplomats blazing in gold and decorations, whom I soon found to be delightful company. When the Imperial couple with their royal guests rose from the table and left the banquet hall in stately procession to the blare of trumpets there was a rush of men and women of the smaller fry, such as counts, barons, generals, field marshals, and myself, to the Imperial board, where ensued a mêlée between these bejeweled ladies and decorated gentlemen for the remains of the feast left by the Imperial party.

I noticed a special guard placed over the gold plate and spoons and forks. Personally, I was modest in my commandeering; I simply snatched from the Empress's bouquet, which she had left on the table, a handful of flowers, while the bouquet was being torn in bits by two noblemen. Some of us were astonished at this behavior on the part of the guests, but I discovered that it was a custom from ancient times for the retainers and the common herd of princelets to scramble for the broken food left behind by the Great White Tsar after any big function.

After the banquet I met Lord Wolseley, who represented the British army, and, during the state dances that ensued, he requested me to point out to him General Skobeleff's sister, who was dancing.

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The Hall of St. George was thronged with people jostling each other, packed almost like sardines, and couples were clearing ground for themselves by slowly waltzing in little circles in different parts of the room.

"I am told that she is over there," said the general, "but it's impossible to get through this crowd."

I had noticed how a few of the guests had managed to wade through the crush, so I said to him, "If you will come with me I will get you through."

The general was, of course, in his full dress and although there was a wonderful variety of uniforms, many of which were much more gorgeous than his, they were not of British red. This brilliant color was of great advantage to our movements.

"We will start now," I said.

"Very well," he replied, as he stiffened himself to follow. In another moment the man in front of me received my elbow in his ribs and his body at once gave way. Each person standing in our path was treated in a similar manner, and thus we advanced slowly but surely. There was no growling on the part of those disturbed, for when I gave the dig with my elbow, I always apologized with a smile; and they, seeing the smart red figure of the general, blazing with decorations, gaining ground inch by inch, cried, "Pardon, m'sieu!"

"Very beautiful; anything like her brother?"

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asked Wolseley when we were at last on the outer rim of the circle of onlookers.

"Yes, a remarkable likeness," I replied.

"Well, her brother was a great soldier; I envy your experience with him in Plevna. I should like to have seen him in the field. Now, how shall we get out of this?"

"The same way, sir," I replied.

"Then I will do a little elbowing this time, myself," said the General.

While in Moscow I was most generously treated by the Imperial Court; for I was put up at the best hotel, a carriage and pair were placed at my service night and day, and I received a free entree to all the theaters and public functions. In addition, a purse was given me containing about one hundred and fifty dollars for extra expenses. Before I left the city Mr. Heath, the English tutor to the Imperial children, told me that his Imperial master and the Empress took the greatest interest in the upbringing of their children, and every evening they would be present at the bedside of their young ones while they said their prayers. And he told me, what pleased me very much, that the nursery was practically papered with my drawings of the dramatic incidents of the Russo-Turkish war.

But, as I have heard Mr. Atkins say, "Life is not all beer and skittles." In spite of all this regal hospitality and being practically in touch with the Imperial court, brushing up against kings, emperors

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and princes and possessing papers on which my portrait with the Imperial stamp proved my identity, I spent a week as a prisoner in the fly-blown restaurant of a frontier station on the mosquito-scourged river Pruth, sleeping in two chairs, sometimes finding myself awake on one because the other was being requisitioned by incoming passengers, simply because my ordinary passport, by a stupid but grave mistake of the manager of the hotel in Moscow, had not been viséed by the municipal police of that city to leave Russia. I spent six days wiring without avail to the British authorities in Petersburgh and London, but at last my dear old friend the British Consul of my Serbian days, the late Sir William White, then Minister to Rumania, came to my assistance, and I was liberated, with many apologies, and allowed to return to England *via* Bucharest.

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Chapter XVI

A MUMMY ARMY

I meet Col. Fred Burnaby—A quick journey—Adventures on the Red Sea littoral—A ghastly sight—I am nearly placed hors-de-combat—Hadendowahs at home—Baker Pasha again—The charge of the 10th Hussars—Rum and asparagus—Down with fever.

EGYPT proved to be a happy hunting ground for the war correspondents for many years after Arabi's uprising. Things had hardly settled down with Arabi expelled and the Khedive Tewfik placed once more firmly upon his throne than there was a kick-up in the Eastern Sudan. The Hadendowahs, ordinarily a peaceful tribe, were up in arms against their former masters, the Egyptians. A retired slave dealer and merchant, Osman Digna, had stirred up trouble and succeeded with his "Fuzzy Wuzzies" in destroying many of the Egyptian garrisons dominating the tribes on the Red Sea littoral. To make matters worse, Baker Pasha—the famous soldier who had fought the great Russian General Skobeleff in Turkey and was now in the Egyptian service—had been defeated and his fellaheen troops had been badly cut up in attempting to relieve one of the garrisons.

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One of the quickest journeys I ever made to reach the seat of war on behalf of my journal was from London to Trinkitat on this occasion. When the news reached England of Baker's ignominious defeat the paper I represented was as vacillating in its policy as the British government was apt to be in those days in dealing with Egyptian difficulties, and deferred sending me out to the Sudan till the English troops were actually moving on the enemy. The result was that I nearly missed the first fight of that campaign.

En route to Brindisi, I met the late Mr. Bennet Burleigh of the *Daily Telegraph*. We were literally in the same boat regarding time. Burleigh, finding we were likely to arrive too late if we depended upon the ordinary means of travel, cabled from Brindisi to the canal authorities at Port Said asking them to place one of their steam launches at our service. As our good old P. & O. ship the *Tanjore* steamed into Port Said, the little canal boat was ready for us and came puffing and blowing alongside.

My colleague and I hastily gathered up our campaigning gear—which by-the-bye was not much, Burleigh I believe taking little more with him than a piece of carbolic soap and a tooth-brush—jumped into the boat, and before the *Tanjore* anchored to take on coal we were well on our way through the canal.

On nearing Lake Timsah we ran into a rain-

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storm, but in spite of the fact that our little craft kept continually being driven out of her course by the violence of the wind and occasionally stuck fast in a sand-bank, the dawn found us outside Suez, and before the sun was well up we had managed to get a passage on board the transport *Northumbria.* An hour afterwards we were started on our voyage to Suakim.

This good luck was followed by even better. On entering the harbor at Suakim our good ship was signaled to make direct for Trinkitat, the immediate base of operations, and the afternoon of the following day found us landing on its beach. We discovered that the British advance-guard had already moved off; next morning the whole force followed in the direction of El Teb.

To my disgust I found that there were no horses to be bought and no servants to be found. My only chance of seeing any fighting was to trudge on foot beside Tommy Atkins, which I did, and, like that warrior, carried my kit on my back.

A tropical rain, though the fall was only for an hour or two, had deluged the usually marshy plain of Trinkitat and converted it into a veritable slough, for as much water falls on the Red Sea littoral in that time as falls in a week of steady downpour in a European climate. The whole British force, therefore, which had set out from the coast that morning under General Sir Gerald Grahame for the relief of Tokar, had to wade

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through a belt of liquid mud and sand. Splash, splash, through the mud, sometimes over the ankles and occasionally up to the knees—splash, splash we went deeper and deeper into the mire.

"Reeves, when is this bloomin' fun goin' to end?" said one Tommy Atkins to another. "As soon as yer on terry-firmy yer off ag'in into the slush. 'Eavens! we only wants to meet the fuzzy-wuzzy and snipe shooting wouldn't be in it!"

These two soldiers, with about a hundred others, had placed their socks in their boots and had slung the latter articles round their necks. Their trousers were tucked up over the knees, and many had slung their rifles across their backs to give their hands more freedom in actively assisting the progress of the commissariat wagons when the deep ruts in the ooze of the track caused the carts to sink up to their creaking axles.

Afar off on the desert we could see that the water had subsided, for the advance-guard of the British army was in bivouac on a sandy stretch outside a mud fence-work, called Fort Baker. The men dribbled into the bivouac, puffed, blown, and weary after the strain of the toil across the belt of mud. To add to their discomfort, no sooner were the fires burning briskly, kettles boiling, and the chill gradually thawing out of their weary limbs, than heavy clouds gathered and another downpour deluged everything, putting the fires out as quickly as an extinguisher on a burning rushlight.

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We were all drenched and lay soaking till morning. However, the hot sun of the Sudan, within an an hour after he had shot up from the horizon, scorched up every sign of moisture, and again imparted suppleness to our stiffened joints.

With the dawn the general's pacific envoy, who had left the night before with a message of warning to the enemy to disperse and not obstruct our advance, returned with the proverbial "flea in his ear," and reported that the Arabs meant fighting. At 8 P.M. the simple breakfast had been eaten and the order "Stand to arms!" was given. Rifles unstacked, our little army formed up in oblong square and the "Advance" was sounded.

Our cavalry, consisting of the 10th and 19th Hussars, moved slowly forward on the left flank of the square. As I was not mounted I thought I should stand a better chance of seeing the fighting if I were outside the formation, since directly firing commenced the force would be enveloped in smoke. I therefore followed in rear of the cavalry. As the 10th Hussars moved off to their position an officer rode up to me and called out, "Do you remember when we last met in the Khyber?" It was Captain Slade, of the 10th. "Look me up after the fight; we'll have a chat over old times." And he laughingly rode away.

I never spoke to him again. His life's blood was dyeing the colorless sand of the desert before the sun was down that day. He fell trying to save

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a comrade, Lieutenant Probyn, who had been unhorsed, and was trying alone to hold three of the enemy at bay. This gallant action was just like poor Slade, who was always generous and self-sacrificing.

An hour's march brought us in touch with the enemy. They soon opened fire on our left at long range. Presently, from the direction of the coast, the shriek of shells became audible, and I observed H. M. S. *Sphinx*, in the Trinkitat roadstead, trying to cover our left flank by shelling the enemy. The range was too great, however, and the result was as little damaging to the Arabs as was their rifle fire to us. In fact, the shells from the *Sphinx* much inconvenienced our own cavalry; one projectile burst so close that our troopers were obliged to scatter for a time.

Marching, as if on an Aldershot field-day, over undulating sandy country, the square moved briskly to the weird screech of the bagpipes and took no heed of the desultory shots of the enemy, who gradually retired as our men pressed forward toward the village of El Teb. To me, the square was soon only a single blot on the desert. Sometimes, indeed, a depression in the ground completely hid it from my view and at last I had to depend on the screel and hum of the bagpipes for guidance.

It was now only about ten o'clock in the morning, but the heat was intense, and at times the atmos-

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phere became quite stifling. Presently I detected in the air an odor which was sour and sickening in the extreme and in another moment I had nearly stumbled over a dried-up corpse. It was a mere mummy. The skin and flesh had shrunk to the bones. A few yards farther on I came across several more dead fellaheen, shriveled to parchment in the dry atmosphere of the desert. These bodies, it was plain to me, marked the route of Baker's disastrous retreat, for they all faced toward Trinkitat, in the direction of the coast, and were lying on their stomachs exposing gaping spear wounds just below the shoulder blades. Each had been given the *coup-de-grace*—a slit across the throat—by their Hadendowah foes.

Even this sight hardly prepared me for the ghastly one which shortly presented itself. There were no vultures in the air or slinking beasts of prey to give warning, only the sickening, sour odor of dried human flesh. Suddenly I stood on the verge of a slight depression in the desert, and in the hollow in my immediate front lay literally hundreds of glistening bodies all stripped of their clothing, their glassy skins shimmering under the rays of the fierce sun.

A little in advance of a group of shreds and tatters of dried flesh and grinning skulls lay two corpses paler in color than the rest. The taller of the two I recognized by the color of his beard and by his clean-cut features as my old friend and

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companion in Bulgaria, Dr. Armand Leslie. The other body was that of Maurice Bey who, with young Forrester Walker, had stubbornly stuck to his post and had heroically died.

Walker I did not find. Poor boy! I remember him after the Tel-el-Kebir campaign in '82 kicking his heels in Cairo, harassing the government for employment. While waiting for something to turn up he would occasionally amuse us with drawing caricatures of himself and his future adventures in the service of the Khedive. In one of these sketches he predicted his appointment to the Gyp artillery, the winning of his spurs in a brush with the Arabs and his being decorated for his services; and finally he represented himself as captured by the enemy and being taken home by a Hadendowah to his family on the end of a spear. I little thought then how soon that burlesque would be borne out in veritable tragedy.

Handsome Armand Leslie was my friend and companion in many a trying situation. Some seven years previously we had nearly met our death together when in Bulgaria in a most inglorious way—by the poisoned fumes of a charcoal brazier. He had been saved then only to meet this end—and where was the glory, even now?

A chill seemed to pierce me through and through —a chill that even the scorching, blasting heat of the noonday sun could not dispel. I was for a short time spellbound with the gloom and horror

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of my surroundings when the sound of distant cannon aroused me. Our work had begun, and we were now about to avenge the death of those heroic Englishmen and that sad remnant of Baker Pasha's army which lay rotting on the desert. I hastened in the direction of the square.

As I gained the crest of the reeking hollow, I saw that a shell had just burst in the rear of our square. Then another exploded in front, tumbling over several of our men. Up till now we had kept steadily moving in the direction of El Teb without firing a shot. When within about a thousand yards of the Arab position we came to a halt and opened with our screw-guns. So well-aimed was their fire that they seemed at once to cause the enemy's musketry to slacken.

The bugles sounded the "advance" and our men stepped forward, steadily firing at the Arab sharp-shooters, who quickly sought cover behind their intrenchments and a large mud fort in front of the village. In another moment our front became entangled in a veritable hornet's nest of the enemy. From out of unnumerable pits as intricate as those of a rabbit warren, black fuzzy heads popped up; then the muzzle of a rifle gleamed for a moment in the sunlight, there was a puff, the whiz of a bullet, and the head disappeared.

No wonder, when the order was given to charge the trenches, the front face of our square lagged a little, for the occupant of each pit had to be dealt

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with individually and many who had feigned death became troublesome customers to those of us who were too eager to reach our objective, for these "dead men" bounded out of their pits and charged our men with their spears and knives.

From the embrasure of the mud fort a Krupp field-piece occasionally belched a yellow flame and a shell shrieked its way over our heads to find a billet in the desert beyond. Looming through the smoke we saw suddenly a gaunt figure appear upon the parapet, with the *terai* hat on his head silhouetted against the gray cloud from the cannon.

"See! there's Burnaby, sir," cried a man who was limping with a hole in his sock and a bit of good flesh torn away. "Ain't he a-givin' them beans."

The gallant colonel was unattached and had come out for the fun of the thing. He had topped the parapet and certainly seemed to be doing some remarkable execution among the Arabs with his shotgun. Three natives protecting the Krupp gun rushed at him, but he calmly plugged into them with his left and right. The first charge of buck-shot at close quarters knocked the one clean off his feet; the other two, staggering with the sting of the pellets, were subsequently bayoneted by some of the Highlanders following closely on Burnaby's heels. Before the captured field-gun had fairly recoiled from its last discharge at us, Major Turner of the Marines was repeating an operation which

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he had performed at Tel-el-Kebir, blazing away at the retreating enemy with their own shot and shell which they had left behind them. Now was the time for the cavalry to do its work, and the 10th and 19th Hussars were accordingly ordered to charge the broken enemy. But though the Arabs were beaten there was little running way in their retreat. When they were followed too closely they turned and fought again.

I happened to be standing by a mounted officer in Egyptian uniform. Two keen gray eyes sparkled with excitement from between the bloody folds of a towel which had been hastily bandaged round his head, as they eagerly followed the movements of the cavalry. I looked more closely and found the wounded man to be Baker Pasha. He had passed through many vicissitudes since I had arranged his memorable meeting with Skobeleff in the club at Constantinople, for he was now in the Khedivial service, and all his wonderful personality and success as a leader could not bring the sweepings of Egyptian jails and the cowardly fellaheen troops to make a decent stand against the Hadendowahs. The great Pasha's glory had been almost extinguished by the disastrous defeat for which this square of British troops had been sent out to exact retribution.

Baker was now engaged only as intelligence officer. I did not at first recognize him in his tarboosh with his blood-soaked headgear.

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"I hope you are not badly hurt," I said as I grasped his hand in sudden recognition.

"No, my dear Villiers, not seriously hurt," and for a moment tears seemed to stand in his eyes, as his hand trembled in mine.

"Look! Look at my old regiment charging!"

The troopers of the 10th, their swords gleaming in the sun from out the whirling eddy of dust, were bearing down on the scattered bodies of retreating Arabs.

"That's it! Let them have it," he cried. "See how the boys go through the—"

Here he was rather incoherent, for his wound began to bleed afresh. Not heeding the ruddy drops rapidly pattering down his dusty tunic he still held my hand, and when the mêlée was at its height he clenched it as if he were firmly gripping a weapon. He had led that regiment a score of times when playing at war at Aldershot—but here, when his troopers were in action, he was denied the privilege of leading them.

Backward and forward the cavalry charged, but still the enemy was not flurried; they stood their ground and gave battle. Some rolled under the horses' bellies and cut and slashed with their two-handed swords, ham-stringing several animals and bringing their riders to the ground. Those of ours who thus fell never rose again. It was in this fight poor Slade and Probyn met their death.

Lancers would have done more execution, for the

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sabers of the Hussars were not long enough to give the Arabs a quietus when they threw themselves under the horses. At last, out of sheer weariness, the enemy made off and the field was left to the British troops.

The scene after the fight was ghastly enough, especially round a square brick building which we found was intended for a boiler-house. With great surprise, we gazed upon this curious relic of Western civilization in this savage spot. Near it an old iron boiler lay rusting on the desert—one of the follies of Ismail Pasha in the course of his efforts to open up the Sudan and establish industry.

Civilization had gone to the wall since those days. Round the emblem of a peaceful industry, barbarism in its cruelest mood was seen. The old iron cylinder had been used by the enemy for a breastwork, and here the Arabs had made a bold stand. Dead bodies were so heaped up on one side of it that it no longer offered any cover.

On the top of this ghastly pile was an Arab lad lying doubled up, his head between his legs. I prepared to sketch the weird group, and two soldiers near by were picking up some spears and shields for trophies when suddenly the lad sprang into the air and, flourishing a broad knife, bounded at us. At first I was bewildered by the onslaught, but soon finding that the boy was very much alive and meant mischief, I beat a hasty retreat until I was able to draw my revolver. The two soldiers seized their

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rifles and followed my example. The boy at times came so close on our heels that we could hear the rush of the knife in the air as he cut at and missed us.

Just as I felt the warm flush of his breath on my neck, my companion on the right turned and shot the lad dead before I could pull the trigger, and he fell a quivering mass at my feet. He was still clenching the knife—a short blade twisted like a corkscrew. The fanatical glare was still in his eyes and the peculiar cry of an Arab when he strikes seemed yet lingering on his parted lips. It was a piteous thing to be compelled to kill so brave a lad. Indeed it was always the saddest phase of Arab fighting that no quarter could be either given or taken. After this little incident I was for safety's sake obliged to cover with my revolver every apparently dead body I came across.

We bivouacked on the battlefield that night with the dead and the dying for our companions. When the stars came out and the heavy breathing of the slumbering soldiers and low whimperings of the wounded broke the stillness of the night, one sorrowing little voice was distinctly heard above the snore of the sleeping soldiers—the bleatings of a lamb that had lost its mother and was now held as a mascot by a stalwart Highlander, who had fallen asleep with the little animal in his arms.

Before sundown Major Cholmondeley Turner of the Egyptian army had pluckily volunteered to return to Fort Baker for rum rations for the men.

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It was a hazardous service, for no one was safe outside the British lines. Turner was now overdue and we were becoming rather anxious about him. Toward midnight a large fire was lighted as a beacon to guide the belated convoy into camp. A heavy dew fell over the desert, which chilled me through and through. I could not lie down, for the ground was as wet as sand between the tides, so I kept pacing back and forth before the glowing embers of the beacon.

I was hungry and weary, for I had not tasted food since early morning, yet I was loath to ask any of the company officers for food, since they had only short rations themselves.

Therefore I thought I might make an appeal to Major Turner when he arrived, for I had been of some service to him during the day in keeping his water convoy from stampeding during the fight.

Presently the grousing of camels stole over the plain, and soon the gurgle and swish of the liquor barrels were distinctly heard and a ghostly line of "baggles" (baggage camels) glided past the fire.

On seeing me, Turner at once offered me a tot of rum. I was about to ask him for something to eat, but my nerve failed me. However, the spirit gave me courage and I hit upon a plan to approach him tactfully on the matter. I had a number of excellent cigars with me. I handed him one, for which he seemed most grateful. He immediately lit it with a burned ember from the fire, and passed the stick to me.

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"No, thanks," said I.

"Don't you smoke?"

"Oh, yes," I replied; "but not now; I should be ill. I have not eaten since dawn."

"Great Scott!" he cried, "that's twenty-four hours ago. You must be starving. Here, boy, bring my saddle-bag." After probing its depths, he laughingly said, "I have not much to offer you—only a tin of French asparagus. Let us share it."

I found that rum and asparagus were not bad things in a way, even if taken together; but, in spite of Turner's hospitality, I also discovered that short rations and a damp desert do not go so well together. I was down with fever next morning, and was taken back to the coast on the tail-board of an ambulance cart—which put an end to my campaigning for a time.

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Chapter XVII

THE FUZZY WUZZY

A brush with Osman Digna—A friend in need—A welcome ration—The sleeping army—The awakening—Rallying groups—My uncertain horse—The fight in Kipling's "The Light That Failed"—The "Fuzzies" break the British square—My friendly Highlander.

I RECOVERED from my attack of fever just in time to see a brush with Osman Digna and to be in the fight depicted by Rudyard Kipling in *The Light That Failed.*

"I say, sir, don't you think you had better lie down? Here, you are just in the line of the lead," said a stalwart man of the Black Watch as I walked up to some Highlanders lying *perdu* in a breastwork of sand.

I had been peering through the gloaming, trying to make out the distance of the little spurts of flame flickering in the direction of the foothills in our immediate front, when this friendly corporal of the 42d touched my shoulder and suggested that I should seek cover behind the curtain of sand where the front face of our square was lying. There was not much to get behind in the wretched

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position in which the British force found itself before Tamai on that night.

We had been marching from Baker's *zereba* from shortly after noon till sundown over a scorching, stony plain, studded here and there with cactus and mimosa bush. We had advanced into the jaws of the enemy and were now bivouacked on a sandy patch between the outlying foothills on one hand and the base of a chain of rugged volcanic mountains which ran parallel to the whole length of the Red Sea littoral on the other. The scouts of the enemy were already in sight on the low black rocks of granite and syenite in our front. Splashes of light were flickering like flecks of fire in a distant hamlet when the sinking sun lights up its window-panes. But no such suggestion of peace was in those reflections from the hills. The broad barbs of the spears of Osman Digna's warriors gave out the light, blood-red with the rays of the dying sun, as if already reeking with gore.

Presently these shafts of fire seemed to turn to silver in the light of the moon and flickered here and there all about us as the "fuzzy-wuzzy" warriors began to skirmish in our direction. Springing lightly over the scrub, they wriggled along on their stomachs, seeking every little bit of cover. Before long the Arabs began to show up in considerable force, but not wishing to court an attack till the morrow, the general ordered our mountain guns to open fire and disperse them. A few beautifully

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placed shrapnel shells checked their advance and knocked the devil out of the tribesmen for the night, so that we were eventually left in peace to cook our rations.

Mimosa bushes were cut down and a *zereba* was formed of the thorny branches around our position to stop any sudden inrush by the enemy. Our men ate their suppers, smoked their pipes, and soon, rolling themselves up in their blankets, sought slumber. The seeking was not long with Mr. Atkins: soon the simmering, gurgling, fretful pulsations of a sleeping army were heard on all sides.

I was not well-pleased with our position that night: to me it seem excessively insecure. On our right flank was a mass of rock a few hundred yards distant, for some extraordinary reason not occupied by us. In our front, not more than a thousand yards away, were some six thousand of the most daring fighting men in the world, lying *perdu* in a network of rocks and *khors*. We lay out in the open on a plain slightly shelving upward toward the enemy, an excellent target to any Arabs bold enough to creep round our flank and occupy that mass of rock unsecured by us. I had already planned in my mind the attack which the Arabs might make—a galling fire in the middle of the night from the ominous-looking rocks, while a few thousand spearmen attempted to rush our *zereba*—and then there would be the devil to pay. I kept my revolver ready to hand.

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More and more that unoccupied rock bothered my sleep. It seemed to change into a mountain that grew bigger and bigger till the whole adjacent ground was filled with its immensity. Suddenly I found myself very unmistakably awake. The simmering mass of humanity around me was also on its feet and very wide-awake. The whole force, with the low growl of expletives peculiar to Tommy Atkins when disturbed of his slumber, was struggling to fix bayonets. A sharp rattle of musketry from the foothills, the hum of bullets overhead, and a distant beating of war-drums were the causes of Tommy's sudden awakening. I looked anxiously toward the mass of rock; it was still unoccupied, but, so far, we were safe.

We stood to our arms for several hours; it was a desultory fight, all on one side, for we never returned a shot. Like summer rain, pit-a-pat the enemy's fire fell, now dying away to a few sprinkling shots and again waxing to a brisk shower of bullets. It was a very uncomfortable situation, for motionless troops are always uneasy, when a sharp cry here or a groan there tells that bullets are finding their mark.

An inanimate form was carried past me by two comrades toward the red lamp marking the doctor's quarters. Here and there a sharp clatter would signify that a bullet had struck a mess tin or commissariat box. In the middle of the square a horse, which had been shot in the withers, lay struggling

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vainly trying to gain his feet. Pit-a-pat! pit-a-pat! the bullets kept falling and stirring up little puffs of dust on the open ground in front of the *zereba*.

"There is no dashed fun in this sort of fighting," Tommy growled, "When will that blooming sun come up and show us where to shoot?"

I had at the moment walked up to the front face of the square, where my corporal friend already quoted had manifested his solicitude for my safety. Corporal Dunbar—for that I found to be his name—had now mysteriously disappeared. There was no one else of a communicative turn of mind near me, for, in spite of the occasional twang of a bullet, the men were sullenly dozing. I sprawled on the sand and looked up at the stars. They were growing fainter and fainter. Now Venus grew pale, then the Great Bear faded, then Orion gradually waned and died out in the lilac dawn. I was wondering how many of us would be looking on those stars as another dawn melted them into space, when a tall gaunt figure, carrying something under his great-coat, strode between me and the brightness of the coming day. Then it stooped down and whispered; "Would ye like a wee drap o' rum, sir?" It was my good-friend the Scottish corporal once more.

"Dinna be feart, sir," he continued. "Tak' a sup. Thae Fuzzy Wuzzies hae spoilt the taste o' rum for at least two or three of us, so it's all right. They won't miss it. Drink!" I took a long pull at the

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flask; it at once drove the chill of the night from my veins and braced me up for the coming struggle.

"My good friend," said I to the corporal, "let me do something in return. Come and see me at the home of Levi, the famous 'Jew merchant of Suakim,' and we will have more than Passover cakes. Or better, look me up in London if we get out of this."

The sun came up at last. The enemy's sharpshooters slunk back into the purple shadows of the *khor* like bats to their crannies, as the glorious day burst upon us. Now, left in peace for a time, our men prepared their breakfasts, then folded their overcoats and made ready for the coming fray.

From Baker's *zereba* came our cavalry, right into the eye of the sun. The handsome face of their gallant leader, Herbert Stewart, radiant with the spirit of war upon it, glowed in the morning light. At 8.30 we moved out from the *zereba* toward the enemy, our two brigades in echelon, the second under General Davis in front, the first under Buller about 700 yards in rear. I was watching Buller's square forming up when the sound of rapid firing was heard in the direction of Davis' square. The correspondent of the *Times* and I resolved to see what was going on at the front, so we mounted and rode toward the leading brigade. The front face and part of the right flank had been charged by a strong force of the enemy, which had sprung out of a deep *nullah* about a hundred yards away.

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I rode up behind the 65th just as their flank was being broken. Our advance had been suddenly arrested, like a great wave striking a boulder, and the Arabs having captured all the guns on our front face were now pressing their attack on our flanks. In a wild charge they drove through a gap at the angle between the 42d and the right face of the 65th, hurling that regiment back upon the Marines, who were hurrying up to its support.

The Fuzzies came bounding in before the Marines could close up their ranks. Some say the men of the 65th gave way; if they did, it was done slowly and reluctantly. To me they seemed to be moving backward to keep in touch with the Marines and to preserve the square formation, for several men coolly knelt and deliberately took aim at the Fuzzy Wuzzies enveloping our flank.

But even British pluck must fail sometimes, and that *nullah* held too many of those bounding, reckless dare-devil fanatics for any man to face. Nothing could stop them for the time—neither Gatlings, Gardners, Martini-Henrys, nor the cold steel. They forced their way into the square and there they stayed for a time. Though a short period, it was long enough to teach Mr. Atkins some respect for the fighting qualities of the Hadendowahs. Unless a bullet smashed a skull or pierced a heart they came on furiously, and even when the paralysis of death stole over them, in their last convulsions they would try to cut, stab, or even bite.

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Among the mob of fanatics came even little boys brandishing sticks, led on by their parents to the very muzzles of our rifles. When they were once in our square an absolute mêlée ensued. Here and there groups of our men tried to stand their ground, but slowly and surely we were making a retrograde movement: we were getting the worst of it. Enveloped in smoke we could hardly distinguish friend from foe.

For a moment or two firing ceased, and then an appalling silence reigned, as a deadly hand-to-hand conflict of stabbing, cutting, and scuffling commenced, in which both sides were too intent to give tongue. Only an occasional rallying shout from an officer was heard, and at one period, when things looked very badly indeed, I heard the voice of that plucky war correspondent, Bennet Burleigh, shouting: "Give it to the beggars! Let 'em have it boys! Hurrah! Three cheers—hurrah!"

Many a man who feared the day lost rallied on that lusty cheer, and thought things must be improving, and fought all the better for that belief. A certain general has called war correspondents "the drones of the army." A few more drones like Burleigh when Tommy Atkins is in a tight corner would not be detrimental to the success of the British army in the field.

How I got out of that fight I hardly know to this day. A great source of anxiety to me was my horse. This animal was the only one I could pro-

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cure at Suakim and had been condemned by the military authorities as unsound. Still; he could stand on his four legs and move, so to me he was better than nothing, for I had been down for many days with fever and was not strong enough to tramp it; but in an unlooked-for emergency such as this he gave me grave anxiety. Knowing his weak points, I was always speculating as to what the brute would do next as I struggled through the human debris of the broken square.

Once or twice, as I lay flat along the animal's back urging him onward with my spurs, Arabs would leap out at me from the smoke and poise their spears ready to strike; but they refrained risking a thrust at one who was moving so swiftly when there were easier targets nearer to hand. I fired my revolver at any dusky form I saw emerging from the smoke; but still the figures flitted. The regulation revolver is not much use against Fuzzy Wuzzy; he seems to swallow bullets and comes up smiling. If my horse had gone lame or played circus tricks in the fracas a blanket and a narrow hole in the sand would have been my coverlet and resting place that night.

However, Buller's intact square, moving up over the ground we had left, diverted the attention of the enemy and gave us a chance to rally and reform. Then we advanced in line and recaptured our guns. This was the turning point of the battle. Their numbers decimated by point-blank rifle and

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gun-fire, the Fuzzies melted away, and soon the few survivors were being pursued across the hot sands by our avenging cavalry. But they had succeeded in breaking a British square.

On my return to England after the fight I read in my morning paper: "For exceptional bravery in the field, Sergeant-Major Dunbar to receive Her Majesty's Commission."

I drank Lietenant Dunbar's health and wished him further promotion. Later on I was quietly painting in my studio when a sharp ring at the bell brought me to the door. On the threshold was a smart Bond Street type of gentleman in frock coat and enameled boots, with an orchid in his button-hole. He raised his hat and said, with a suspicion of a slight drawl in his speech, "Why, don't you know me, Mr. Villiers?"

I was fairly staggered for the moment; then the memory of him flashed on me.

"Come in," said I, "and sit down. Have a cigar and tell me all about it."

"I have no time for that just now. I have come simply to ask you for the service you promised me."

"Right! Fire away, Mr. Dunbar."

"The fact is, Villiers," he slightly hesitated, "I am—eh—I am going to be married tomorrow, and I want you for best man."

END OF VOLUME I

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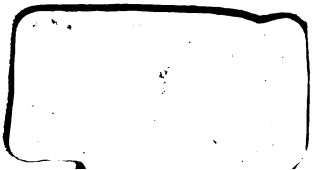

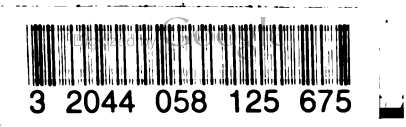

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